Tested

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Tested

by CigaretteDaydreams

Summary

Anarchy has broken out in a mental institute. After illegal experiments the patients have lost further touch from their sanity, Running from an inmate Will Graham finds himself trapped in the Ripper's domain.

under reconstruction, please come back at another time!

Caught

Chapter Notes

> All the patients have been experimented on with a process called the Engine, so this fic is not supposed to represent actual people with mental disorders. The experiments have changed the inmates to display more violence and exacerbated conditions.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

His hiding place was compromised. Ears tuned to Tobias's footsteps he recognised the blatant longer step as he peered up through the splintering oak of the crate he was crouched behind. His breath caught in his throat; The inmate's stare was locked on his position.

Fear was an unwelcome taste as his top lip beaded sweat and coated his mouth in an acidic tang.

He darted. Tobias lunged. Crates crashing around them as they violently entered the thin mock corridor between the store room boxes and the wall behind.

As he was pressed closer and closer to the wall, hide and seek on boat yards came to mind- - His introduction to claustrophobia, wedged behind an engine with his teenage ribs crushed between hot bulky metal. Yet it had never felt like this; like his foot was on the glue trap and it was too late to retreat.

He scraped his nails raw, dragging himself through slim gaps.

"Little rat hiding in the walls!" Tobias's deep voice was strangely composed, a clear contrast to the mania he was exhibiting as he gave chase. Anticipation rife through his shaking form while his feet pounded faster and faster.

Will tore around the corner. Trying to remember the last time he'd seen Gideon or the Verger siblings, it would be his luck to bump into them now.

Like most of the asylum this path was mistreated. Mold dating back decades gathered around forgotten boxes. Laziness meant Will's route was becoming thin, boxes stacked closer and closer to the walls that narrowed the path in front. With dread he acknowledged a dead end was likely.

He risked a backwards glance, quickly caught in manic brown eyes. Without effort his empathy sucked at the bloodlust, feeling it swirl tight around his organs. *Smaller, lower class* . His life meant absolutely nothing to this man. He was a game, someone to taunt before pulling the plug on.

He tripped, tangled with Tobias's emotions. One hand thrown forwards meant he was able to catch himself on the splintering wooden floorboards. *fk.*

He spun onto his back however fingers were already claws in his legs. He convulsed, kicking with full strength at Tobias's hip to strike bone under the rubber soles of his inmate issued shoes. Tobias went down, although Will was dragged with him as his claws latched into the cargo material of his trousers.

A **crunch** impeded Tobias's head impacting the cement wall. Grip loosening in shock to complete his fall backwards.

Will reached for a crate to rock up to his knees, an old shoulder injury threatened his balance but his knees remained stiff, just able to get to his feet.

Tobias thrashed on the floor, crashing into the crates either side of him until slamming echoed. More light flooded the crevice as crates fell. Revealing hints of the room behind.

Will zipped open his inmate issued jacket for a knife he no longer had, Itching to see Tobias dead and no longer a looming threat that could chase him across the institute. Rage overtaking thought, he let his imagination swim, but ultimately pulled himself back, Tobias was almost on his feet. Too strong and too smart. Will saw his own death if he attempted a barehanded fight.

The crates exploded as he forced himself through. After tip-toeing around for two days he was overstimulated with the deafening noise from the boxes thundering to the floor; Barely resisting the urge to cover his ears with his hands.

Where was he?

His eyes snapped to instruments--shoddy violins crudely wired with thick human intestines, donated kindly by the dead bodies bursting from a brick fireplace. It was a macabre music room.

Will knew he had seconds before Tobias would be on him but he couldn't help pausing to appraise a grand throne, dragged from god knows what department that sat at the centre of the room. It was located here in Tobias's block yet the man himself didn't sit on it. Tobias isn't the only one to be wary of, his subconscious warned him.

Will sprinted, old caution of openly travelling the asylum dissipating as he ran through the open door and entered into a dim corridor.

People in the accompanying rooms had heard the commotion, big sick eyes rushing to watch from open doorways, cheering and laughing before dissolving into rancid coughs that splattered blood across the already filthy floor.

The experiments had been physically harsher on some, peeling fuschia skin and hair loss were common in most who'd been exposed to the evils of the Engine. They staggered forwards like zombies, mindless to anything but violence.

A door swung open in front and a malnourished man with ash blond hair rushed out, arms flung wide. Will grit his teeth, narrowing in on his weak knee. They spotted him, long legs throwing themselves at him.

Maintaining pace, Will slammed his fist into their nose bridge, preying they'd retained enough intelligence to equate pain with avoidance. They let out weak gasps, frail body shattering as they fell to the floor.

With no idea how close he was to being caught and killed, Will rushed down the corridor and an accompanying staircase.

"Don't follow, the cannibal will get him now." A deep voice croaked from behind.

Into darkness, Will sprinted down a pristine hallway. Feet echoing against pale plastered walls while two more sets ricocheted far behind.

His hand slapped over his chest, attempting to hold himself together to keep going. “Come on.” He hissed to himself, starting to see bright green light swim over his vision, almost beautiful in the darkness. He'd barely slept or eaten in the few days since the asylum erupted into anarchy, the drugs that had been controlling his symptoms had all worn off, and as much as he wanted to deny it, he’d been exposed to the horrors of the engine just like the inmates upstairs. He had no stamina for a long chase nor could he fight Tobias. He'd have to hide.

Hoping the darkness was doing something to cover him, he took wider steps to hide his footsteps.

He forced himself to control the shaking as he twisted the handle to slide into the next room. He threw the lone occupant of his pocket; a soon to be broken phone, down the corridor, preying the bouncing would draw his followers onwards, before closing the door and slowly crouching behind.

Rapid footfall surged towards him. He held his breath.He began some half assed meditation to loosen the noose of panic, that pulled tight around his throat.

Peering around the office, the furniture looked sturdy. Everything made from a premium wood. He must be in the staff wing. A glint drew his eye, just able to make out a faded picture of someone with their wife and cat pinned to a corkboard.

It was him. Will’s lip curled into a snarl. The employee who‘d stripped him when he got here and searched him thoroughly, before wielding a syringe like a knife to stab him with experimental serums for his own amusement. Will spat. Staring at the man's smiling face.

This shouldn't still be bothering him, he'd had a few days to process that the employees had been the first to be butchered by the freed inmates, the guy was most certainly dead or at least disfigured. The inmates may be mostly mindless but they still felt resentment.

The tendons in his ankle stretched uncomfortably as he shuffled forward in a squat. Resting his weight on his fingers, he used the toe of his trainer to reach a pencil. Rolling it towards him. One set of footsteps continued to sprint up the corridor, steps echoing further and further away. Yet weren't there two people before?

Someone must be paused at the door.

Randalls' influence swept over him. The pencil morphing into a claw while his teeth bared and pushed out from his lips. *No* . He scratched at his hands, breathing deeply to centre himself. Randall didn’t retreat easily, scratching deep through his arm as he was suppressed. *No* , Randall thrived for chaos, he would risk attracting the other person’s attention.

As a creek sounded outside, Will sank back, flicking through murder cases he’d worked on until he found someone quiet. Ah-ha, Peter Davis; a proud man, who used to hide in alleyways to kidnap women. He would most certainly do. He could feel Peter emerge from behind, bristles from a greying beard scratching past his own.

Don’t let them hear you

He slid off his jacket and squatted next to the door. Bubbles of hysteria swam up to pop in his stomach. Aware, if he opened his mouth he’d be giggling.

A knock sounded twice

“Tobias, did you come in here?” This inmate was capable of conversation so Will briefly entertained reasoning with him, before deciding that would be rather boring. Can’t risk it, he told himself.

The door was pushed open by chubby fingers. *Now!* Moving swiftly Will’s jacket was thrown to drape over the man’s head, pencil swung wide to push into his trachea. The man flailed, shouts muffled by the thick canvas. Over his shoulder Will caught the smiling face of the guard from the photo.

Pencil unable to push through the thick tendons in his neck, Will let it fall from his hand then shifted to grasp onto the man's jacket-covered skull. *NOT the face* Davis cried, desperate to prevent further injury to his prize. Transparent fingers showed him where to place his, so when he slammed the head against the door frame you could still make use of him.

The body dropped, feet kicking Wills as his limbs fell. Peeling the bloody jacket away, Peter frowned at the dented right side, twisting the head cruel-ly to face him. The eye had been crushed against his fractured skull. *Useless* . Red Liquid pooled over the webs of his fingers to drip onto the floor. His lips pushed out like a child who’d broken their toy.

The sound of a door opening somewhere nearby had reality prickling back.

Blinking dry eyes at the body. A flicker of discomfort rose. He had to kill him, he told himself. This one was justified. He kicked the corpse further into the room.

Hearing no further sound, he peered into the darkness of the hallway and stepped out, trying to distribute his weight evenly so the floorboards stayed quiet. contemplating returning, he flicked his eyes back towards the staircase but there was a man standing in the middle of the hallway.

He shone in the darkness, an impressive form bordered in burgundy that highlighted tight cheekbones and broad shoulders. Gold fire burst from around his arms, flickering around him to expanse the entire corridor.

Will's mouth was open as he stared. Hand reaching forwards before closing into a fist and returning to his side. He made it a point to never acknowledge his hallucinations so he shook his head as he continued walking.

He pulled at his hair, strands coming away in his hands. He was tempted to look back at the corpse he’d left, to check if he’d really done what he remembered doing but wasn’t sure if that would leave him in the best headspace to keep going. Guilt and Self-hatred were old friends but he couldn’t afford to panic here. No when he could still feel himself being stalked.

Making it to the end of the corridor, he turned left through a low doorway. Stepping onto light coloured wood into what appeared to be a conservatory.

Windows spanned the wall in front. Rain throwing itself against the panes. He was aware that thick Iron gates enclosed the whole asylum, yet he allowed himself, just for a second, to believe that he was listening to the rain from his place on his porch. Dogs nipping his heels to throw their ball.

Iron fell over his vision. Rain slapping down harder as he blinked at the foreign space. His previous worries from his life before seemed meaningless, well, he still had sleepless nights but instead of

murderous instincts, he was fighting literal murderers. His instincts were the only thing that kept him alive. He still detested his impulses, but he'd accept them to survive.

An armchair was turned towards an empty fireplace, Will noticed. Someone solitary had resided here. Leaves from tall monstreas dripped clear water. Collected neatly on a plate placed underneath the plant. What a strange contrast from the pss and dirt that coated the rest of the institute. A staff room he realised, eyes taking in clues. This was somewhere the staff had come to relax from the madness upstairs. Multiple plants were well cared for across the space.

He only heard the last footstep before a hand locked around his shoulder. He couldn't raise a hand in time to block the blow to his face, lip taking the impact as he stumbled.

Tobias.

In the time that they'd lost sight of the other Tobias had gained a knife. Teeth shining in the moonlight as he surged towards him. He had no time to sink to the back of his mind and let someone else take over.

Police training let him dodge the first strike. But Tobias swung again, swiping the blade back like a sword to catch Will's wrist.

Will only had time to flick his eyes down to access the damage. No bones. No muscle.

The corridor was seven or eight steps away. He wouldn't make it to the door. His heart dropped through his chest with the realisation .

A strong hand clutched at his shoulder, the first layer of skin taken under the curl of nails. Time dragged as Will's head lowered to watch cold steel slip inside his abdomen.

Cloudy vision took in the knife handle protruding from his flesh.

In too much shock to feel pain he jerked, desperately trying to prevent it from sinking further. He grasped Tobias's thumb backwards in some mimicry of a move he'd once observed. As he shoved harder, Tobias jolted and the audible click of his thumb pushing out of its socket bounced around the room.

Opportunity signalled by the crack. Will got control of the blade, teeth grinding together as he pulled it out. His breath came in gasps, whistling through his bared teeth. Hot molton heat surged from the wound, burning him from the inside.

Tobias was angry, still trying to clutch for the knife despite his injury, but Will succeeded in keeping it out of his hands in exchange for micro cuts across his palm. It clattered to the ground between them.

Tobias bent to claw for it, hand ghosting over the handle. Sensing his opportunity Will drove his knee into his face, hard bone slamming into Tobias's nose.

A yowl rebounded across the space. And Will stomped down on his stomach. A coil of satisfaction uncurled as his manic expression gave way to pain and fear. Tobias was sprawled, his dislocated thumb clutched at the place Will's knee had struck.

WIll crouched, stomach burning, to pull the knife slowly into his grip. Leafs stroked across his arm as he rose above Tobias,

Thick branches cast a brittle cape around Tobias. He dug flesh to pierce limbs, Tobias bled out somewhere after the third branch swam threw his innards. hanging him like a christmas babble onto the tree. Spring came, Sun shining seeds fell splitting to burst open carnations and roses, he watched them bloom drinking the life blood.

“Stunning.” a lithuanian accent, deep.

As if on a conveyor he looked left, strong broad shoulders were the first thing he noticed, then the height, familiarity itched under his eyes. The man in the hallway had not been a hallucination. Will desperately scanned the inmates expression. Admiration, familiarity. A murderer clearly, His display hadn’t frightened him.

His breath heavy with exhaustion, He pressed against his stab wound. Hoping the dark fabric of his t-shirt disguised the severity. Surprisingly he couldn’t feel much blood.

Remembering his art, he looked forward with clean eyes. Bile rose at a citizens disgust, what Jack would say, what Molly would think of her sweet boy. What he’d done to a mentally ill person. On autopilot he stepped forward to pull it down, the body barely supported snapping on the thinner branches to pool, soaking the wooden floor.

He could feel the question from his right

“Some beauty wasn’t meant for us.” He said voice echoing around the large room. Quiet was rare in the Asylum. He couldn't hear anything but their breathing,

“And why not, when it is provided so readily” The man motioned upwards, sending thoughts to the rapid inmates pulling each other apart.

“You believe them to be beautiful?” Will said mimicking the same motion, disgusted

“Crude instruments, and man/pig hybrids haven’t been in good taste i’ll admit, although the Engines influence has created a freedom, like I have never seen.”

So he was acquainted with the Vergers. Will had last seen them occupy the women’s dormitories in the east wing, this man had moved around Will realised.

This was the first actual conversation he’d had with another inmate, everyone else consumed by rage or fear, he seemed untouched by the experiments Will thought, although clearly morally warped. Something itched at Will, The man had always been like this. The engine hadn’t touched him. Whatever crazy he was, he'd been born with.

“I’m surprised you've left your cushy den,” Will teased finding some of his amusement had soaked in. It was all becoming clearer as he stared back at Tobias, the throne in his music room to play his bloody violins “he made it all for you.” It had always been about this man. Tobias worshipped him.

The man hummed, before crouching, Will was struck, why would a predator expose his back? Trust, test or a trap. He stayed still.

Pain blistered where his fingers nervously rubbed together, thin paper cut like wounds from Tobias's knife, strangely more prominent then the pain from the stab into his abdomen. Thoughts drifting back to the knife, he tried to look for it in the gore.

"You've punctured the kidney and Lungs, were you going for symmetry?" Hannibal questioned peeling the cloak back to watch the stab wounds threw the t-shirt transparent with blood. With no beating heart to pump it blood was starting to slump around the wounds. Distracted from his knife hunt, Will was transfixed. His previous crime that had got him sent here had been hazed with instability, for the first time he clearly watched his influence.

"It was a drawing the chesapeake ripper left, although I suppose I would need to expose the lungs more." The works overlapped in his mind, why had he done this? Why now was this particular drawing displayed?

"Remarkarkable." The man split an eerie smile, skin pulling at harsh cheekbones.

He wore his age well, wrinkles looked purposeful, the grey in his scalp was blended through strong brown tones. He was very attractive, an old repressed crush on one of his fathers friends reared its head. They had the same assurity that only arrived with age. He swallowed watching The man rise to his feet, his height dominating the space.

Will reluctantly recognised a growing enjoyment, the simple pleasure at connecting with another human. Something he was barely able to do outside the mental institute.

He traced the man's features, mind stuttering on the expression; Familiarity. The man knew the scene, either he had seen the highly confidential drawing or- "I'm performing as the Chesapeake ripper to the Chesapeake ripper." Will mumbled half to himself.

Hannibal Lecter. He was aware the ripper had been thrown into this asylum, although due to the flashy nature of his crimes he'd hoped he'd have gotten killed by now, so wouldn't be someone he'd have to fight.

Hannibal's eyebrows raised, daggered teeth leading his grin "Would you tell me how you came to your assumption, I once thought myself allusive?"

Will rested his body weight on his back foot, old resentment for the discrimination sure to follow, then immideately felt ridiculous for being scared of judgement from someone who was certainly some new species of psychopath.

"The psychology hasn't caught up, but I've been told I have some sort of empathy disorder." WIll waited, watching Hannibal's brain tick.

"A true gift, tell me, how did it feel to be me, did you see the spring." Hannibal questioned

"I can see but not relish, I'd rather keep what sanity I have left." the mans gaze was intense, Will couldn't meet his eyes, if normal murders triggered instability, what would looking at the ripper trigger? From his phrefral he caught flared nostrils.

"But sanity is unnatural for you, not mentioning the encephalitis, you haven't ever conformed." Hannibal assured, the invisible gesture at the Murder infront of them went unsaid.

“You can smell enchabilitus?” He wondered if his earlier hallucination assumption was correct. To distinguish between mental disorders by smell, did he even have that strong of an imagination. “-And you don’t know me.”

Also why was he still responding, instead of planning how to get out of the Ripper sector of the asylum.

Clearly physically able and a notorious serial killer, this man was no more safe then anything upstairs, yet, Will trusted his instincts, this man wouldn’t kill him yet, he had proved interesting.

A thump ricocheted around the room as an arm hit the door sill to the conservatory, Will glanced at Hannibal to find his eyes already on him. A deep brown almost red in the centre. The ripper wasn’t startled. Will turned to watch the fat man he'd killed earlier stumble in. The absurdity screamed hallucination, but Hannibal was reacting, so the man lived.

Moaning clutching at his dented head he zigzagged “-obias, who did this to-bias.” The man spoke heavily lisped, slanted eyes stranded at the death in-front.

Hannibal shone with amusement, feeling Will’s eyes he turned to watch WIll in turn. Barely registering Franklyn moving past, up to the body of Tobias.

“You removed the pencil?” Will asked, Hannibal gazed at the angelic features of the young man, A trail of thought imagined clay molding around the curls and cheeks to sculpt Eros, He decided then if it came to it, that's how he would be displayed. He wondered again at the logistics of the gift of empathy. Never had he been predictable, but this man could see him. A long dead part of himself stirred

“I wouldn’t violate my hippocratic oath.” Was he ever not amused Will wondered.

Turning back to the unfortunate scene, echos of agony trailed the man, insane or otherwise the pain he must be in. He felt his own head split. Unable to look any longer.

Hannibal bent forward “I also clean up after myself.” Was murmured, the bearist rush of breath cool against his cheek. Maroon stared into Blue before striding forward.

His forearms gleamed, reaching up in one fluid motion pressing deep into the mans bloody neck and twisting. With a ta- da motion that Will hated made him want to laugh. The man was at peace, lying next to the person he'd died for.

Rain was muffled against the glass. Wind shaking cheap panes.

Where would he go next? He had constantly been moving since the revolt, chased from one area to another, old goals of using the phone on top of the North tower fell back into his head. The phone he had hurled down the corridor. Hannibals eyes were locked on him. He may not have a choice.

“Is he gonna be Dinner, or am I to walk to my plate?” The Chesapeake rippers link to cannibalism had been denied but Will knew he wasn’t wrong when he’d studied the case files.

“My thoughts on eating you have nothing to do with the kitchen, Franklin has served me well, he shall make a fine accompaniment to what I had planned.” Hannibal leaned over stripping Franklin of his over coat. Will could barely see over his blush, mind stuttering over what Hannibal had said, had he intended on…?

“Will you be staying for dinner?” Hannibal inquired from his bent position, Will didn’t expect to be given a choice, his mind flicking thru options, what would leave him alive, although he still didn’t find himself fearing Hannibal, and was starting to believe if he opted to leave, Hannibal wouldn’t kill him for it. The other meaning of dinner spun more graphic images. He very rarely felt attraction, however heat was pooling in his spine, An apparent exception; male serial killers. He also hadn't eaten in soo long. Food was rarer then gold in the asylum.

All his life, every thought of his had been suppression. Never permitted to find what his body craved, allow himself any indulgence in case it led to tragedy.

Encephalitis had released his conditioning, brutally murdering Randel Tier. But with his conviction and the drugs; he was getting treated, he saw normality, he could have normal relationships, but it never quite felt like this. Like living.

“I’ll stay” Will responded

Chapter End Notes

Thank you so much for reading,
Please leave Kudos if you enjoyed

I also love reading comments

The last meal

Chapter Notes

Terms:

The engine: the expermental serum the paitents were injected with

See the end of the chapter for more notes

A mutilated face and bloated stomach, not particularly appetising. However dead cows never did inspire hunger.

On the ethics and logistics of eating a human, surprisingly he didn't have strong instinctual objections or even disgust. He grew up poor; he'd got used to eating what he'd been given.

Hannibal was yet to bring out a scalpel, but he was sure there was one on him, jacket most likely, although possibly somewhere convoluted like sewn into his socks.

"Would you let me see to your wounds?"

Will flinched, hand reflectively covering his abdomen. He had a vague memory of reading that Hannibal had studied at John Hopkins as a surgeon, he was qualified. However his license may have expired, while being incriminated for thirty three counts of murder.

"I'll take your advice, but I'd prefer to do any treatment myself." Will said.

Hanibal appeared to accept this, rising to his full height and motioning to a door at the other end of the room,

"Please come with me."

Will followed, thinking that maybe he didn't want to be watched.

"Please take a seat." The small space was clearly a break room for the staff, a limited kitchen with a frumpy red sofa wedged in against the back wall. No where to hide.

"I thought the kitchen would be your palace." Will said

"It is a form of temple for me, however in the adjacent wing there is one much better equipt" Hannibal replied opening a high cabinet while looking back over his shoulder "although you've hardly introduced yourself" There was a feline way to Hannibal, and just like a cat Will wasn't sure what would try his patience. He was a dog person after all.

"Will Graham," he responded, no use hiding it. The news of his incarceration had remained local, he doubted he was worth a Wikipedia article, so wasn't surprised when Hannibal failed to recognise

him.

“Hello Will, my name is Hannibal Lecter.”

He politely nodded as if the name wasn't splashed around daytime television.

“Can I see your hands Will?” Hannibals palms opened, waiting.

Will looked at his own, brown with blood and dirt. Strong fingers slid against his, their pads lacing together, Will’s flexed unconsciously, their palms slotting together. He cringed at their awkward imitation of holding hands. Murders sung, life had been ended by these fingers gripping his so gently. Hannibal’s hands twisted causing Wills to flip in turn, studying the thin cuts.

“Antiseptic and bandages will be adequate, the pain will probably be worse tomorrow when the scabs have come in, and every move reopens them,” Hannibal affirmed stepping back “you’ve another wound on your abdomen, correct?”

Will grunted, shuffling his jacket off before lifting his inmate issued navy t-shirt carefully over his head. He was hit by the scent of his own sweat. Fear and anger sunk deep into the fibres, when was the last time he’d worried about something as innane as body hygiene. He threw both over the sofa arm.

He stared, finally able to see the wound. It looked better then expected. Dried blood a smear from a jagged ruby line.

Looking up sensing movement, Hannibal was close, “May I?”

Will took a deep breathe gathering false bravado. Hannibal wasn’t a shark, the sight of blood wouldn’t send him into a frenzy “Sure.”

Palms forward, the universal language of a non threat. Finger tips met and slid down his chest, pushing just above the cut. Fuck that burned. His lip was clenched between his teeth at the sting.

Hannibal hummed, the sound of his lips moving audible in the quiet, still tracing the wound.

“Without access to x-rays, I’ll use my clinical judgement,” A sharper prod, it was starting to feel wet, blood moving across the skin “-the knife hasn't clipped the bowels or other organs, infact I believe it's only sunk into your internal oblique” Will reopened his eyes watching Hannibal turn away, opening a high cupboard and pulling out a neon green first aid kit, Will took it off his hands, arms dropping with the weight “I would recommend stitches.”

Packages poured out as he clicked the green tab, plastic sliding over his lap onto the floor, he slid down careful not to bend, getting everything back onto the sofa. Sharpie labeled each item, seems like the doctor's handwriting stereotype did not apply. Font nicer than his wedding invitations.

Will looked in awe at the amount gathered, clearly there had been additions.

Needles and thread were in the same pack. He considered bandaging his hands first, but thick cotton hands would only impede. He was already at a disadvantage with how sore moving his fingers were.

Disinfecting his hands burned, maybe he should have asked Hannibal about this, fingers roaring red. He tried to ignore it, patting his trousers to lose some. Fibres sticking to the cuts.

He got everything ready, lowering the shaking needle down.

“Don’t hold your breath,” Hannibal was watching from the door, “Limiting the oxygen to your brain will make you less accurate.” He finished

Having an accomplished Doctor study his medical technique, his inner dog beared it's teeth. Giving a deliberate glance that Hannibal chose not to see, Will started.

It hurt less than expected, but how was he supposed to manipulate the needle out again? Finally getting the correct angle he completed the first stitch. It wasn’t deep. hoping it would suffice, he slowly made his way up the wound.

He slipped on the fourth stitch, tearing the wound upwards, teeth firmly in his lips he didn’t make a sound.

He tied the thread. Stitches pulling tight, hopefully a good thing considering its purpose. The wound throbbed. Irritated red skin flared around each structure.

Unable to lift his arms, he gingerly worked his t-shirt on with one arm, draping his jacket over one shoulder for now. He could feel each thread pulling at its new home.

“Does the sink work?” He nodded to the tap

“Yes.” Was returned with a gesture to go on.

Nails scraping to clear the bloody grime fully from his skin, he washed. Hands cupped, he threw water up at his face, easing the oily feeling he'd just noticed was unbearable.

“I’d kill for a shower.” He warbled over the sounds of the tap

“I have one down the hall, free for use.” The voice came closer than expected.

Odd, he'd not been monitoring Hannibal's movements. His mind was off-guard. Not a trusting person in the slightest, but Hannibal's presence wasn’t sending warning signs, the sensors were off. He supposed that's why he’d been successful. Who suspected the polite Doctor. Unless it was all his exhaustion.

Deliberately pushing Hannibal’s kill count to the centre of his thoughts, he kept one eye on the man.

“With a lock on the door.”

“You wouldn’t kill me, not till after dinner,” Will quipped, maybe saying it enough might make it true “And I’m fine.” There was only so much risk he could take today, however tempting. The shower scene in pyscho may become a bit to autobioagraghical.

Hannibal pulled open the cabinet, the reach of his arm exposing the ripples in his back muscles.

You were taking Lobotan for your enchaplitus correct?” Hannibal asked, Will nodded slowly "I don’t know your dose, but take approximately double of these pills."

Will slid two out dropping them down his sleeve, quickly making a show of swallowing. He would observe Hannibal for the next hour to see if they were sedatives or poison. No matter how good a

mask someone wore if they expected you to drop dead they'd react accordingly.

With a long backwards glance Hannibal walked out.

A toe cramp put him back on the sofa, unable to bend and massage the area he flexed his foot desperately. It did fade.

Exhausted. He indulged himself, sliding further back onto the sofa. With no distractions the past three days ran dramatically through his mind.

Delirious the first day, serum still enhancing his hallucinations into mania, the second more clear, It was only yesterday he'd woken up enough to tell who was a person and who was an apparition. And he'd still fucked that up, Hannibal he'd ticked off as a mirage. The doubt was his biggest fear here, not knowing your reality, was any of this actually happening, or just some fucked up dream caused by the Engine.

He couldn't torture himself.

His sore hands clutched the sofa arm. white sprinkling his sight. Lack of sleep, food or drugs he wasn't sure.

Footsteps. A heavy set coming from his right. There was another corridor from the conservatory to the side, this wall must back into it. Frozen, visions of previous days came to mind, endless hours waiting for the next inmate to find and kill him.

It was most likely Hannibal he reasoned. Forcing his feet to carry his weight.

Flickers of ember, the fire had been started, he paused peering either side of the door, before stumbling back into the conservatory. Back to the wall he swept the room. Hannibal wasn't there.

The floors were also clean. In the dim light he couldn't even see a stain, no hint of the earlier gore, like it had never happened. He'd plead his insanity, except the lingering bleach smell. He hadn't been in the right mindset to really appreciate it before, but the lack of mud, blood or piss also with intact floorboards was startling. The entire top of the mens cells had been broken, he'd been pretty out of it at the time, but he can just remember jumping over some chasm to reach the next sector.

The fire called to him, his frigid digits outstretched towards the heat.

However the flickers of light still couldn't touch the blackness of the corridor, looming in the corner of his eye. Anyone could hide there, he'd never know, till it was too late, although there was a kindness in the dark, it wasn't indiscriminate, aiding him with Tobias.

Yesterday's thoughts swam back round. Remembering the phone, he made his way to the corridor approaching from the right to check no one was crouched behind the left wall. Stepping further forward, his eyes adjusted slightly. Nothing. Well there were three people who could have picked it up. Two of them were dead.

Fuck, he'd clung to that phone since the start, it had been a talesman of hope, and now it was gone. He tried not to dwell on the almost permanent despair in his lungs.

He returned to an armchair, limbs folding unnaturally.

He would wait here for whatever performance Hannibal would put on.

=

Meeting room 2 proclaimed the plaque.

The door stuttered against sapphire blue carpet, too thick to go under. Pushed, it flopped back, exposing cement underneath.

Circles flung around the cealing from cerulean candles lining the rectangle board table. Shiny fake blinds pulled tight. Plastic cutlery and pearl coloured napkins, sat across the two seats adjacent in the middle.

Motioned onwards Will took the left seat, only partially sure sitting in Hannibal's desired chair wasn't rude enough to warrant flesh.

Hannibal's gait drew Will's attention to a trolly.

Balancing two plates effortlessly on his forearm Hannibal's presence arrived behind. He kept himself still as his plate slid in front.

The smell hit him first, meat, garlic and butter.

The warmth was startling, his hands rose over the plate, feeling steam lick his fingers. Threw the webs in his fingers, he saw flesh, soaked in some kind of beige sauce, asparagus stems and potatoes with a neat square of butter melting steady at the top,

"Thigh with Cheat's Béarnaise sauce." Hannibal's accent lit up the words,

Will could only stare, astonished a meal could be produced under these conditions.

The wine was poured. As it gushed, Will corrected his assumption, It wasn't wine but grape juice. Seems alcohol was as rare as he thought. Juice, always the drink of choice for mental institutes, every meal in the canteen had been served with some variant of it, before his world went mad.

He cut the meat. Not appearing overly suspicious, more white then red. He raised it high feeling burgundy eyes. The sauce hit his tongue first, an involuntary moan rose, mouth wedgeding shut around the bite to prevent it, but god was it good. The sauce held a mayonnaise like quality, onions?

"I shouldn't have to tell you it's delicious." Will quipped.

Hannibal's will to please conflicted with his prior assumptions. Craving human affirmation contrasted with his view of humans as stock. Why care about the pig's opinion? There were either exceptions or an alternative agenda. He wasn't deluded that his illness disguised his lickability. So what was Hannibal's goal here?

"You are remarkably clear headed." Hannibal noted taking a bite. Wills own fork hadn't stopped, shoveling his food, he hadn't eaten a full meal in three days.

"I was only exposed to the engine four times." Will sucked on his fork, chasing the sause.

“You must have arrived sometime within the last month, I doubt Chilton would wait long with someone like you.”

“Try a week," Will responded. Breathing thru the stomach ache he realised something wasn’t adding up “you’ve been here four years Doctor, yet you're untouched by the Engine, Surely Chilton also wouldn’t have resisted that long.” What the engine would have produced in the ripper, even he was curious.

“I’m disappointed in you Will, can’t you see?” Hannibal tutted refilling his glass.

He wasn’t an oracle. He didn't have any theories jumping out. He'd have to concentrate, fall into the back of his mind.

Giving in to Hannibal's taunts, he placed his fork down.

It had been a long time since he actively tried to sink into his empathy. He allowed himself to fall. Faintly hearing the lap of fluid flowing into Hannibal's glass.

Frederick Chilton and Hannibal Lecter. Links formed. Chilton’s name was on the character witness for Hannibal's trial. They'd known eachother surpluss of five years. Friends?

Fredrick had admired Hannibal, an excerpt from a psychology magazine years prior to the cannibal's capture, contained Chilton praising him on his revolutionary treatments.

Hannibal thought Chilton a moron, yet he’d also praised Fredrick's Engine experiments, had Chiton admired Hannibal that much, he would spare him, more accurately spare his mind... His ideas.

“You created it.”

He’d had no misgivings on Hannibal's character, but it hit him then. The evil this one man had created, dooming four hundred inmates to a life of pain and confusion. He couldn’t speak. He couldn’t look at him.

He bit back his anger, he didn’t have the luxury to express himself at the moment.

“Now you are disappointed in me,”

Will looked up, curious to see if Hannibal was surprised, judging his expression was like looking for shapes in smoke.

“Why the fuck would you do that?” He asked, wondering if he would get anything close to the truth. Hannibal took a long sip, gently lowering the wine glass.

“I’d found success in prescribing the Engine to my patients that suffered with anxiety and stress, always achieving very positive results. When I was incarcerated my belongings were auctioned off-” He looked at Will accusingly

“I don’t have any of it.” What a leep, why would he have Hannibal’s shit?

“I was hoping you had my drawings, I would quite like them back, you did mention them,” He said as he took his last bite, cutlery carefully together, interlocking the knife with the fork. He chewed, swallowing before continuing “somehow Chilton won my notes, reading my success he began to experiment, I do admit, I am fascinated with how wrong he went in recreating the engines serum.”

Excuses were hard to fact check here, Will was sceptical.

“Why wouldn’t he consult you, surely he could have traded some food-your drawings for advice.”

“I did tell him he was wrong, However Chilton isn't a man easily turned around.” Hannibal supplied.

Will bet the protesting was rather weak. There was a childish part of him ready to believe whatever excuse he was thrown if it made cohabiting easier. Also he desperately wanted to avoid a moral debate, he was slightly scared he’d lose somehow.

“Can I go for a home run and say you also started the riots that caused this.” Will prompted, motioning around vaguely.

Hannibal laughed, white teeth flashing. “I’m sorry Will, I cannot take credit for that, I did think at first it had been..a friend but this hasn’t proved true.”

That he could believe.

Not remembering it himself, he had no evidence on the start of the riots. The way this institute had been run he leaned towards an accident. Bloody Chilton

“What do you think about the Engine’s results?” Will was curious, he hadn't had a chance to really discuss what was happening with anyone before.

"I don’t have access to the data, nonetheless the results seem... chaotic, I still recognise mental abnormalities, but more violent and exacerbated than i’ve ever seen them as a psychologist.” It lined up, Wills own symptoms were heightened when the serum was in his system, he was lucky he hadn’t been exposed enough to make the effects permanent.

“So why haven't you tried to escape.” Will asked, was this hell someones heaven.

“I was interested to see what would happen, are you seeking out?”

He was cautious how much he should reveal, “Yes.”

“Who did you imagine you would call in your hour of need,” Hannibal asked.

He must have found the phone, Will opened his lips to play it off as one of the other inmates yet, if Hannibal had seen him throw the phone, he didn’t want to risk credibility this early. Although admitting to wanting the police here wasn’t something Hannibal would enjoy. He’d be as honest as was safe for now and play defensive.

“Don’t you also want this to end?”

Hannibal was silent, taking his time to think. “Isn’t it better then in chains?” He quipped finally

“No, not to me.” Will wondered what was funny about his answer

“But you see, you are not scared of the inmates or death, you are scared of yourself. Freedom. You want the chains to descend from the ceiling so you can stop making choices, retreat back into the cave to watch the shadows,” Will glared, only Hannibal could make a anarchical institute favourable. “Why be chained when you can thrive.” He finished.

“Why then submit for the last four years, I don’t believe the great Hannibal Lecter couldn’t find the key. This isn’t your heaven, Toilet paper napkins, plastic utensils. You've settled for scum.” Will watched Hannibal’s eyes flicker, appealing to a side of the ripper he knew well, pride.

Taking a breathe, his hand shook, it felt good to release some of his pent up anger, but he was braced for consequences. Surprisingly Hannibal appeared calm, amused if anything

“I have accepted less to be free, your goal is to bring the authorities down on us all, I doubt I’d see the silver utensils in your world.”

“Not if we escape.” Will stuttered over his last word, we? When did Hannibal merge into his plans, compromise for a man he’d met today. He caught up to himself. Hannibal was the only protection he could get, the only half assurity that he could emerge from here whole. He’d abandon contacting the police for a free passage out.

Hannibal took a long time to respond, frowning in thought, surely he must have considered this, Will had eyed every window, walked through every door, praying the next would be an exit. Hannibal had settled, found a home in hell. It didn’t fit the rippers profile, a trail of bodies sure, but accepting less than what he was worth. No.

“I find important decisions are not best made at night, or to be more accurate morning, here let me show you to your room.” Hannibal finally said.

His heart sank, he could hear a polite no when he had to. Plans dissolving into ash.

-

Right of the next corridor, Hannibal pushed open a door.

A simple wire frame bed, and a thin brown wardrobe in plastic wood were the most prominent furniture in the room. The floor was scuffed, not in dirt but repeated use, He could see shadows of people, leaving dents where shoes had been kicked, a pair of glasses sat on the windowsill, lit by morning light coming through thin frosted glass windows.

“I am in number 66," Hannibal said smiling, of course he was, Will rolled his eyes, “goodnight Will."

He knodded in leiu of a response.

The door shut, he listened for footsteps, but couldn't hear any. Thick walls.

Would he stay? His animal brain wanted sleep.

He'd avoided beds. They were obvious, someone hunting would check them. Yesterday, in the men's ward, he’d found a quiet room with a bed and crawled under it. Dust and black grime his blanket for the night. Not sure how long he’d slept for when suddenly someone was banging open the door. Proved right he saw the covers thrown to the floor as someone swept the room, overgrown toenails clicking against the floor.

There was a simple lock in this room. Testing the door, it stuck. Although he’d worked for the police, if someone wanted to get in they would, he needed more protection.

The wardrobe proved too heavy on sensitive stitches. After a stroke of genus, the bed instead was pushed half way across the door. Someone opening the door would hit the bed first. He'd be awake for his death.

He stood restlessly, talking himself down, kicking his shoes off and getting in.

He coconed himself. It was musty, the last person in had not changed the sheets, although so was he so he couldn't really judge.

Sleepy thoughts, he succumbed. A broad arm tight around his waist, sliding him back into a warm chest. He opened his eyes to wake himself up. He couldn't indulge himself. But did wonder if this was his unconscious reasoning for trying to get Hannibal to follow him out. He really had great taste.

He had made his bed, he would lie in it. Feeling little lumps, he rediscovered the pills in his sleave, dry swallowing them.

Chapter End Notes

Eyy new chapter and the next is written as well!
I'll be double checking all my spelling ect so please bare with me if you read it now.

Please leave a review, I havent written much in a while <3

Thank you soo much <3 <3

Eden

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will finally found the conservatory again.

He'd also managed to shower and change his clothes. All due to lucky accidents; Attempting to move the cupboard the previous night had thrown clean clothes out into view, and the shower, he'd been lost and mistakenly opened the bathroom door in an attempt to find the conservatory.

He'd been at risk of hypothermia and burns retrospectively as mid way threw, the frigid shower water had given way to steam. Gas heaters doing their job in hell, or perhaps the staff sector had a private generator. In payback his wound was now raw and swollen.

He kept his back straight, avoiding bending and stretching the already strained stitches. Squatting to sit on the floor had been a trial. It would probably be easier on his wound to sit in one of the many old fashioned armchairs surrouding him, but he'd just finally got the fire lit, It was nice here. Heat just starting to lick up his neck.

His thumbs played with the cuffs on his new designer fleece he'd discovered. Funny enough he'd owned a cheaper dupe back home to walk the dogs in. The previous occupant must also have kept dogs, thin white hairs weaved within the fibres. He'd kept the green inmate jacket, a bit bulky, but any protection he could get he'd take.

A lump in his right pocket outlined scissors, he'd found them rummaging around the small staff kitchen. Twice he'd taken them out to make sure they was still there. They were big grey clunky things, blade unfortunately chipped and dull. Holding them felt weird as well, He suspected they were for left handed people, which he wasn't.

He pulled his hands away as Hannibal appeared. He'd also changed clothes. A grey jumper replacing his previous black.

“You've made use of the shower.” Hannibal's eyes ran over his wet hair.

"I hope you don't mind, I used some of your 3 in 1 shampoo.” Will responded, he was surprised with his own tone. Seems the shower had put him in a good mood.

“I'm glad you made use of it”

“I'm surprised you haven't concocted your own yet" Will leant back onto his hands, watching Hannibal go into the small staff kitchen.

He responded only when he sat across from Will, finding it rude to shout across the room or something else archaic. He glided a mug over. Will sniffed the Garnet liquid. It was tea. Normal black tea. The last time he'd had tea- he couldn't even remember.

“ah- manufacturing shampoo has sadly not made it on my to do list, The tragedy of three in one shampoo must persevere” Hannibal really was obsessed with scents and tastes, eyes shutting as he took a sip. He'd even noticed an air freshener aerosol on the table, who else.

He supposed you didn’t become a cannibal by accident. What did make someone turn to human meat Will pondered lifting his mug, His own cannibalism he pushed away uncomfortably, some sort of shipwrecked starving morality or politeness. Hannibals was deeper, some philosophy on keeping memories or domination. He could almost feel the answer, although he wasn’t spending much time thinking, not sure he wanted to know. No use humanising him, it would only lead to his own doom to start understanding.

He blinked coming out of his thoughts as Hannibal spoke, “Perhaps you could make some for me.”

Will laughed, what ingredients did he have at his disposal; blood, mud, bit of tea.

“Pay my keep,” He reached up, running a hand through wet curls “If I live to see tomorrow I just might.” he sobered a little. This wasn’t a holiday, Hannibal wasn’t a friend. The tea was bitter, limescale tileing together to float.

“Do you believe your death to be imminent?” Hannibal questioned. Will wanted to scoff, burying it in his drink, If he hadn’t read it himself he'd know Hannibal was a phycologist. Tone sending him straight back to cold leather chairs, legally trapped sessions.

“we have one foot in the grave, not to say I won't fight my way out, but surely you know it's unlikely even you will survive this.” Will twisted his head, carefully watching Hannibals expressions, either he didn't believe in his risk to his mortality here or he had no fear of death. It would be on par with his narcissism Will thought critically.

“If thats true these may be your last days on earth, So tell me, how will you spend them?” bringing the conversation back to him. Typical shrink.

“get drunk, watch the sunset.” he joked lamely, taking a sip of now tepid tea to hide his discomfort. He held it close to the fire, feeling flames lick his knuckles.

Will was the first to notice the person, mug dropping in slow motion to burst over the fireplace stones, he grabbed a fire poker automatically wielding it as a woman approached from the dark of the corridor. He hadn’t heard her. Hannibal rose creeping behind.

Prominent burns covered her entire body. Dark patches of scalp barely holding onto lank brown hair. Hands stretching she was feeling the warmth, here for the fire. Threw tortoise shell glasses Will saw kind jade eyes.

Snake like Hannibal was behind her, twisting her neck to crack.

Will watched the fall in horror. Face hitting the ground first, a dull thud.

“she wasn’t a threat.” Will said quietly. Echoing fingers clasped around his neck.

Her glasses were smashed, shards resting around closed eyelids.

“do you know if there’s a shovel?” Will asked, holding his wound still as he slowly got to his feet.

“There’s no door outside,” Hannibal said “if you wanted to bury her it would have to be in a plant pot.”

He couldn't look away from the woman. Her life springing up from the evidence she wore. The burns were old and self inflicted, it would be obvious to suggest she was institutionalised for

pyromania. She wouldn't have spoken.

“Then I’ll break a window.” Will said looking away to spy grass threw the conservatory.

Feeling Hannibal's rising aggression, he decided to first look elseware. As angry as he felt, breaking Hannibal’s favorite shit could mean his neck next. He’d take revenge just before he left. It would be a parting gift.

He half waited for an apology, for Hannibal to express some sort of regret, but again he'd forgotten Hannibal wasn’t a civilian. Just another death to add to an exhaustingly long kill count. Meaningless. He could make excuses in that Hannibal was threatened by her, but who was he kidding. If he stayed much longer would he turn out the same?

He was careful moving down the corridor leading back to the stairs. Peering in, several of the office's windows out to a grassy area he assumed met with the grass visable from the conservatory.

The offices mirrored eachother so he picked one at random. Unhinging curtains to stuff around the door for noise control before using the spine of a Law book to punch out the glass. It was louder than he wanted glass flying back, but he was able to take the glass from the pane.

Using a coal shovel he dug her a home in loose mud.

Climbing back, Will immediately knew something had changed. The curtains were spread out across the floor, the door had been pushed open.

He spun. Mind rapidly taking in evidence.

There was a person in the room with him.

He forced a breath, opening his eyes slowly as if to starve off the inevitable.

On three he dropped, eyes level with the desk chair. No one was under there. Rising he spun, pacing back against the wall. There was nowhere else someone could hide.

Crouching slightly he took in the room.

Like an optical illusion, eyes emerged from behind the snake plant. A metre right of the door. Wide dead eyes and jowls, thin lips. He bit a scream. Forcing a breath. It wasn’t going away.

A file flicked open he put the name to the face. Garrot Jacob Hobbs.

His cellmate. For Will's first week, he’d fallen asleep to chants of Abigail. Brutal vibrations as the wall between them was punched. Another inmate had later cleared up Abigail was his daughter, by the constant mutterings, he’d filled In enough to guess what'd happened. As the Engine sunk into his veins he’d found himself talking to her as well.

Nightmare like, the face bobbed closer, lunging for him. He just managed to stay on his feet, a empty corkboard drilling his spine as hips pinned his.

"Where is she!” Hobb’s breath hit the back of his throat. He twisted his head away as solid fingers connected around his neck. Thin hands merged with Hobbs; slender and female. He was still

looking for Abigail Will realised. The daughter impaled in his hunting shed.

“She’s not here.” Will said stupidly, he couldn’t think how he'd survive this. Muscles already aching from trying to push him away.

He clawed desperately at Hobbs hands managing to suck in a long breathe before Hobbs fought back, crushing his windpipe.

"LIAR!"

His scissors were in his pocket. He took a hand away darting down for them. Seeing this Hobbs squeezed, windpipe creaking. On survival mode Will's hands returned to clawing, desperate to get any distance between Hobb's hands and his neck. He'd suffocate if he took his hands away.

A clinking caught his attention. His fuzzy vision inched down. Gnarly weapons were tied to Hobb's belt. He couldn't tell the specifics, but he knew he couldn't let Hobbs use them. He needed to think.

“TELL ME!” hands gained strengh squeezing tight.

Submerged in dead blue eyes. Will tried to concentrate. Hobbs was following someone...Abigail? She was the only one he had any interest in. He must have substituted someone. They would have similar features, female, young, brown hair...

The girl he’d just buried?

“Outside, she ran outside.” He said choking as he released one of his hands to point shaikly out the broken window. What childish tactics was this he chided. Oh god, this wasn’t going to work. Where was Hannibal? Not like he really expected him to save him. He was on his own.

“You better be right.” He was dropped, slumping down the wall as he watched Hobbs move slowly through the window.

Will watched till he disappeared from view. Brain numb. Rubbing the sides of his face. He had nearly died again.

Footsteps pattered up the corridor. Already familiar enough to recognise Hannibal's gait, Will slowly heaved himself up using the wall

“Was there someone else here?” Lit by the light of the room, Hannibals image emerged from the dark corridor. A rushing sense of safety embalmed him. Cheeks pulling into a smile before he could reign it back. Surely this was irrational, what use had Hannibal been.

“An old friend.”

“Hmm, without Tobias it seems the path is clear for guests.” *it was your fault* hung unsaid. Will opened his mouth to ask if Hannibal resented Will taking out his best minion but thought better of it. Don't poke the bear.

“Was it an official role you gave Tobias, pest control?” Will asked instead. The broken window was sending in a draft, a faint whistling noise rushing threw the room. Will moved away to the door, coming to stand beside Hannibal.

“He thought us equals, gathering instruments just had a convenient side effect.” You didn’t need empathy to see that Hannibal didn't think them so.

“My friend is outside the window now.” Will warned.

“I’ll watch out” Hannibal said although he was looking in the wrong direction out into the corridor.

“The-” A callused hand came over his mouth stopping his sentence. Hannibal's gaze was locked on to the far end of the corridor, where the set of stairs led up to Tobias's old lair.

Will followed his eyeline. Partially adjusted to the darkness he could see most of the way. No shapes reveled themselves.

He moved the hand off of his mouth. It was the second time their hands had touched. Calluss and scars greeting his finger tips, surprising for a man with his attitude. Hannibal's hand clutched his and squeezed. He dropped it thinking Hannibal really didn't seem to mind his touch.

“What did you see?” He whispered

“Three Inmates.” Hannibal responded. staying close.

The numb feeling of near death still hadn't left Will, no fear could reach him like this. A deep part of himself ached to see Hannibal tear into them, see the product of years of bloodshed. He was clearly skilled at hand to hand, strong and broad, medical knowledge a key componant, if you knew how to put someone back together you knew how to take them apart. If Hannibal was weary at all he didn't show it.

Confidence was a killer Will reminded himself, trying to gather some self preservation. Victim or murderer he'd read too many cases of assurance leading to doom. The moment you got comfortable, you made stupid risks, you were dead. He reined himself in. Stepping backwards, He was injured, partnered with someone with an unclear motive. He had to use his head.

The light from the open door highlighted them in the corridor. If they wanted the upper hand they needed to move quickly

"We can’t stay here, can we make it back to the conservatory?”

“We should have time, they went to the first room” Hannibal answered, walking back down the corridor before sliding threw a door. Will followed peering into the box room. Strong cleaning supplies hit his nose as he stepped inside. Evidently Hannibal had something here that could help them so he made himself useful and kept watch.

He saw them.

Three men.

They were running. Shit. He flinched, Fingers thrust into his pocket for the scissors. Could they hide? Filling up the whole corridor with their gait, he assumed Hannibal would have heard them. They were suddenly a few steps away. He froze. How could they have got here that fast?

The nearest turned looking at him. A brutal face seemingly devoud of personality. Will dived back as the man lunged closing his eyes as his back hit the floor.

“Will?” Will reopened his eyes, he wasn't dead? Nothing felt broken. Twisting his head around, they were gone. Only him and Hannibal were in the room. His own gasps filled his ear.

Hands under his arms pulled him back to sit against a wall. Rough fingers on his cheek. He looked around. Opening his mouth to ask where they were when he caught Hannibal's expression.

Thoughts crashing down. Another Hallucination.

Anger filled up what panic left. Squeezing knuckles into fists.

His hallucinations had almost disappeared, this was nothing compared to his early encephalitis symptoms or the engines pure influence. He told himself he was lucky he'd only had a few episodes, this was to be expected his mind was still healing.

"Will, are you back with us?" Hannibal asked, Will reluctantly met his eyes, expecting pity or some depressed confused look that had overtaken his ex-wife's face for his bad days, but this was thankfully absent on Hannibal, although looking entertained wasn't really better.

“I’m gonna need you to tell me if someone is real.” Will said, gaze somewhere around Hannibal's ear.

“Of course,” Hannibal dropped his hands from Will’s cheek “would you like to describe what you’ve seen?”

“I prefer to just move on.” Will replied, getting to his feet, they were being persued, he shouldn’t be sat on the floor. Fuck his scar was throbbing, sliding his top layers up some blood was beeding around the stitches.

“If only psychology was that simple,” Hannibal quipped. Looking up Will noticed Hannibals eyes were also tracing the blood. *He wants it* Will's subconscious told him recognising the small mouth twitches. He tugged his shirt down, looking away.

“I was going to give you this, but it seems you already have a weapon.” His voice held no shame or recognition that he'd been caught in anything indecent. He held a knife out, palm up. It looked like a kitchen knife, thick handel, thin blade. Will dropped the scissors he’d stolen, forgetting in his panic that he'd stolen them. Cat out of the bag.

“I think you understand why” He held his open palm out, weary the gift may be rescinded. He had to try though, a knife was more valuable then air.

He let out a quiet hiss as cold steel carresed his grip. He re-pocketed the scissors.

His breathing was almost automatic again, although the headache that accompanied his hallucinations was creeping up, the last thing he needed was for it to develop into a migraine.

Reaching further into his fleece pocket, his hand closed around the tablets still in their cases, he took two, cringing as one refused to fall down his throat.

“Lets go back to the conservatory, we’ll have more space” Hannibal said walking and peering up the corridor. Being penned into a cupboard wasn’t a good option so Will followed finally choking down the tablet.

It felt weird putting a knife in his pocket, if he fell he’d stab himself. So kept it in his hands.

He walked on, hair raising with his back towards the enemy. Could they trap the entrance? He could make a snare if there was somewhere to attach it to. He looked at the flat ceiling disappointed.

Footsteps suddenly ricocheted, Will sped up not bothering to look.

“Real?” he asked, reaching the conservatory, Hannibal was already there standing to the right of the door.

“Real” Hannibal affirmed, serrated knife held in his scarred hands,

Will ran backwards, further to the left. Almost tripping over the armchair placed near the fire, he could feel the fires heat caressing his side. It felt like years since they had sat there drinking tea.

Legs flew into the room, Three people.

Hannibal's knife flew, meeting its mark deep into the first persons chest, the blond girl fell backwards colliding with another man,

Quickly hannibal caught the next,

“We just want him,” The man cried, smiling and lunging against Hannibal's hold towards Will, “He took my King!” Wills heart dropped, Hannibal had a way out. They had no formal loyalty. It made sense to save himself and his home.

The man looked like he was in molt, skin peeling from his face, long strips hanging like tinsel from his cheeks.

“The avenging angels” Hannibal disarmed the man metel thudding down in a fluid dance. He tried to run but Hannibal moved faster, slamming their skull into the wall behind. They flopped down boneless.

Hannibal had protected him? His heart squeezed, trying to swallow back emotions. Did Hannibal feel loyalty to him? Could a serial killer really form real bonds? Will watched, dazed as Hannibal stood a God over the fallen. He couldn't help thinking he’d never met anyone like Hannibal before and lickely never would again. Fear sprung, as he realeased how rare this man was, he could lose him very easily, never connect to anyone like this again, not just in this Aslyum, but in the world.

Its all just addrenalin Will told himself weakly, grattitude. He'd met killers before, He'd met people who liked death and caused it freely, He could find another psyco he told himself manically. Not giving himself time to think as another figure emerged from the dark.

One left.

Will stepped forward preparing his own dance with fate, when he caught their fear. Sure they were all weary of Hannibal, living on the outskirts of his domain, but this one's flight instinct was rapid, Will felt submerged, any chance this man would take to run.

"Our last boy died last night, we'd dragged it on for days, cutting tiny slithers, barely enough for a stew but worth it, we made him eat himself you know." Will giggled

He was married his subconscious whispered, the only jewelry they were permitted to keep, tattoos peeked from his wrist, his mind fed him gold.

"Mary will be delighted to know how you served us, she was a pretty poor cook though, not like Hannibal.” This got more of a reaction.

“How do you know my wife?” His feet took him backwards, one hand clutched at his own face, eyes running back and forth between them, Will was thrilled he was looking at him just as much as Hannibal now.

“Shall we post what's left back?” Will asked, twisting his fingers to spin his knife in an arc, he watched the light reflect up the man's face. Like a rocking horse, his heels lifted periodically, repressing his sprint. what would send him over.

Will lunged, the man tripped over himself falling back

“N-No! please not him.” he screamed, eyes on Hannibal, his face was wet, sweat or tears Will wasn’t sure

“Stay still.” Will cried, slamming the knife down, slow enough for the man to turn and run, knife harmlessly hitting the wooden flooring.

Screams ripped up the hallway. Seems he died anyway, as more people were coming.

Will backed up, Watching Hannibal use his foot to hold the body down as he ripped out his knife from the cooling woman's body. He couldn’t help analysing Hannibal's chilling lack of reaction.

A flurry of legs erupted into the room.

Fist emerging to smash his face. His head flew back, he’d seen that blonde hair before, the same man who he’d hit upstairs. So this was a revenge thing, Tobias wasn’t exactly likeable, how did the spider make this many friends.

He stepped back cheek throbbing, Three new bodies collapsed around Hannibal. He was holding his own, but he hoped Hannibal could also step away. There were too many. Relentless! Their best option was to run. Leave this place, but would Hannibal abandon his home.

A hand grabbed at his arm, he turned, the blonde uncomfortably close, spit dripping from whiskers, he pushed back. The man lunged again he sidestepped, from his peripheral another face appeard from the corridor, no no no.

The man swung, fist dully catching his arm, sensing his opportunity he sunk home, driving the knife forward, he caught the spinning man in the armpit and with the momentum lost his grip, watching his weapon sale out of view, hardly the most lethal of injury locations, the crazed man screamed. Hunched over, yanking the knife out and dropping it onto the floor with a clang, blood poured like an open tap, burning blue eyes locked with his.

He had a few seconds until he was caught so he turned.

Hannibal had mentioned another wing but he could easily become trapped if he went into the side corridor blind. Fuck. He had to make a quick decision here.

Half hoping Hannibal wouldn't find him later, he picked up a chair, side stepped and launched it.

It sailed through the window. Glass crumbling, briefly over taking the sounds of violence. He wasted crucial time seeking marron.

Hannibal's eyes were wide. Looking at his lost home.

"come on" he found himself shouting, oh god he was taking the cannibal, He reached down and threw the air freshener into the fire, distraction time, and turned just missing clutching fingers and ran, someone was close behind.

He felt heat flare all up his back as the can exploded.

He could hear panting just behind, as he tore forwards threw the grass.

The window he'd smashed earlier to bury that girl was to his right, it wouldn't be hard to slip threw. Although he'd be right back in the same scenario he'd escaped from, who knows how many people were coming down that corridor.

Where could he go though? Think! he commanded himself.

To his left tall iron gates capped by sloping barbed wire, infront a Brick wall.

He stopped, eyes frantically tracing the length of the wall. Barely resisting the urge to look back to see how much time he had.

No convenient rope, box or ladder. Fuck, Fuck!

He looked back. It was the blond, shit. As he twisted his head forward, there was something in the far corner. Whatever it was it was his only option.

As he ran closer he made out purple and pink petals.

His chance was wasted on flowers.

He took the scissors out of his pocket but the looming shadow fell.

He spun surprised to see the man sprawled, one foot deep in a hole. His hole. Seems Hobbs had found the dead replacement. What strange luck.

Before the guy could get to his feet Will zeroed in on their neck. Shutting his brain down, he drove the sharpened steel forward.

The man was quicker, grabbing his wrist before the steel could kiss his skin. He panted, jerking back to release the man's hold. Fuck. the man got to his feet swinging himself up. Crying nonsense Will couldn't make out.

He watched their vapid eyes. Opportunity sung, before they had stabilized he kicked their feet they fell onto the scissors poised under their chest. He thrust forward feeling them slip further inside the man.

He drew the scissors out. The heaving body curled down into itself. He ignored the moans of pain. He'd done it. His hands fell to his knees, breathing deep. Strange glee flooded threw his blood.

More people were coming.

His eyes drew back to Pansies. The flowers were in pots. Plastic, cracked. But screwed onto the wall. He stepped back, foot sliding in mud. Blondie was moving but wouldn't be able to get to his

feet again. He could do this.

He sprinted foot catching the first pot, he stomped down, pot splintering into two, rendering his foothold useless. He only had this chance. Hands caught the next one. He felt the same give as it broke but he couldn’t give up. He lunged himself up, flowers raining to the ground as his nails just caught the top of the wall.

He scratched upwards, broken nails or fingers, he got a grip. It was like being split in two as he got on top of the wall. He gasped. Clutching bloody fingers to his chest. He had made it.

He laughed swinging one leg over. The drop the other side was around three meters, it wasn't lickely to injure him he decided.

He could see the whole garden now. Oh, Hannibal was alive. Adrenaline crashed as he watched the chase, there were two men on his tail with more sprinting out of the convervatory like rats. The grey jumper Hannibal wore had crimson sleeves.

“Hannibal” He cried, lowering a broken hand down.

Hannibal ran.

Their hands connected, he pulled up, despite his chest feeling like it would burst open from the pressure.

The men had caught up, greedy hands pulling back.

Will fell forward.

No.

He strained, flinging himself backwards. Hannibal was lifting up now. Just a little more.

Yes! Hannibal had a grip on the wall.

He doesn't remember the fall backwards, but the throbbing skull told a tale.

A hand lifted his neck sliding under, carefully weaving through strands of hair.

He opened his eyes slowly. Daylight burning threw his retinas.

“Hannibal?”

Vision clearing Hannibal came into view. He was lying next to him, dirty and bloody.

Muffled sounds of screaming and chanting polluted the air from the other side of the brick wall.

He shut his eyes as tingles traveled up his body.

“You should live, your neck and skull are okay” Hannibal whispered, Will made some noise of affirmation. Rolling onto his shoulder, guided by the supporting hands.

Opening his eyes, he saw they were lying close. Thighs pressed together.

WIll felt really happy. They had made it. He allowed a smile, it was only appropriate defeating fate once more.

His hands were floating. Looking down Hannibal was moving them, pressing a nail back the right way. He flinched. Pushing and clutching at Hannibal's upper arm.

“No more pain.” He whispered cringing at the sorry state of his hands.

“We will see, especially as I owe you now Will,” Hannibal said, for once he wasn’t meeting Will’s eyes “you did save my life.”

“So did you but if you insist, I'll take what I can get here.” Will joked, feeling a bit more normal, the memory of the glass window callapsing to the floor rotated his thoughts “although I am sorry I wrecked your home” He held his breathe, he wouldn't be able to put up a good fight if Hannibal decided here and now he was too much trouble.

“It doesn't matter.” Hannibal said quickly. Will rolled his eyes, it did matter.

“I’ll help you find another one.” Will said, fuck it, time was meaningless in this place. Previous determination of escaping quickly waned. He could stay with Hannibal until he found an exit.

Slight dread pooled at the idea of separating. Reminding him of his earlier revelation, he wouldn't find someone like him again, he probably wouldn't find another sentient person in this asylum he thought critically.

He was too attached. He should have protected himself.

“Have you reconsidered at all...escaping from here.” Will couldn’t stop his offer escaping his lips. finding some strength to reopen his eyes, Hannibal wasn’t looking at him, seemingly locked behind the wall at the noise origin.

His eyes moved back to Will, a smile creasing his forehead “I’ll come with you Will,” Hannibal said, he had made his decision “if you’ll have me.”

Elated he dragged some energy from somewhere, knees slid under him before he was throwing himself at Hannibal.

A strong chest slid against his own. In his delirious probably concussion ridden thoughts, he wanted contact but had misjudged, too far forward, their lips met. Had he meant to do this? wasn't this all too soon?

Will's thoughts stuttered to a stop as Hannibal deepened the kiss, opening Wills mouth. Fingers cradling his neck.

Clutching at Hannibal's jumper, Will overbalanced, throwing his left hand onto the ground beside Hannibal to catch himself.

Will parted Hannibal's lips again, heat pooling under a sore abdomen. He moaned in pain and pleasure, his wound catching.

Visions flickered, Hannibal's lovers flooded threw his head, empathy an unwelcome pulse. He couldn't Concentrate. Mind flickering of again.

Lidded eyes looked down at Garnet.

His lifeline.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading!
I have an amazing ending planned out so please stay tuned

Please leave a review with what you thought

Re-edited the lot, so if you've read it previously you may enjoy the changes

Blight lands

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Air rushed, filling the gap between their lips. They could no longer ignore reality

Sliding ungracefully off of Hannibal, his head was down, unable to risk meeting curious eyes.

Lips tingling. He ached. Tongue tracing his top lip in mimicry, a taste uniquely Hannibal spreading further threw his mouth.

They'd kissed. Hannibal was attracted to him?

It made sense. Their attraction had pulled them together.

He didn't want to think he was that foolish but it could have contributed to why he'd stayed with the man regardless of the clear danger, and why Hannibal hadn't added him to the ghosts in the asylum.

With trepidation he acknowledged people in romantic relationships were rarely able to read each other's motives, intention or even feelings.

Already it was individually difficult to judge the man. His motions calculated. He couldn't fully trust his instincts here, which was crucial to steady their shifting balance of power. They could ruin the other if they so desired.

Unable to fight studying him, his head rose, Hannibal was smirking. He huffed fighting his own lips pulling up.

"What are you so happy about?" He asked, begging Hannibal to give some part of himself away.

"You always surprise me Will." Hannibal answered simply.

Blue eyes flicked to the daggered teeth he'd felt against his. Heat a trail up his spine, burning for biceps clenched around his ribs. Shitty pick up lines, and romantic cliches flooded his mouth, all too soppy. He wasn't good at this. Refusing to embarrass himself he changed the subject

"We can't stay here," Will looked up at where *here* was.

A dark courtyard, shadowed by a large grey building. Another dead end.

"Fuck are we going to have to go back?" Will asked shivering. Surrounded by high walls they were cut off from the wind, but also the sun, the air was frigid.

Too much pressure on just his knee caps, he got himself upright, careful of sinking further into thick mud. Unfortunately it was too late for his hands, forgetting infection risks with Hannibal's mouth on his.

Getting onto the wall had pulled open the thin knife wounds from Tobias, He brang his hands closer to his face. Using the edge of his thumb he swiped globs of mud off, stinging zapped, revealing his

left ring fingernail cracked in the middle. Delicate skin under the nail was bruised on its way to black. Half of the nail stuck up the other half still attached. Pulling it was excruciating so he left it, reluctant to face more pain this quickly. It would fall off on its own.

“Here, it’s adequate until we find soap.” Hannibal knocked his arm gently with a grey tube. He took it, twisting to read *antibacterial gel* . He nodded in thanks applying it quickly, it thinned the mud, spreading it further around.

Long grass a barrier from the dirt saved most of their clothes, still he doubted Hannibal was happy with the state of them. He looked like he belonged here now, just another inmate, bloody and dirty. It suited him Will decided, he finally looked as dangerous as he was.

Hannibal hummed eyes moving “regardless of the waiting mob, we may not be able to climb back.” Will traced his eye line back to the three metre wall. He was right, getting up there would be a challenge- He cut his thoughts off, they needed to get out of here, not go backwards, the exit wasn’t in that direction.

“I only know there's an exit through the administration block.” Will supplied, it was the way all the patients came in, where they'd taken their last look at freedom. Frogmarched threw glass doors, quartz desks, three monitor computers into the elevator for the one way trip down.

“We’ll enter the building,” Hannibal ignored him, walking up to a smashed window of the looming flat grey.

Will was unsettled. They were going in a random direction, however he followed, painfully aware they didn’t have a lot of options.

“Hey, are you injured at all?” He asked careful about being too loud. Hannibal pulled his bloody sleeves up, muscles coated in light brown hair, but no obvious wounds.

“I am fine Will.” He responded, arms still outstretched.

“Good.” Will finished, turning to the building quickly.

The murmurs of human exclamation were higher in volume, it suddenly clicked they were coming from the wrong wall. Not behind the brick wall, but from inside the building they were about to enter. A scream pealed into the courtyard, hitting a place deep within his ear. Either way they were walking into danger he reasoned, unknowns in front and behind. No escape from either. They couldn’t wait in limbo. Hide in a dead end.

The window ledge was shoulder height for Hannibal, For Will it reached his chin. He’d be pulling himself in blind.

The pain of flexing his fingers, caused a reluctance to use them in getting inside. They were raw. An odd idea of covering them with his socks infatuated him for a moment, anything to not expose them to more dirt. Although this may defeat the point. Hannibal had suggested bandages yesterday, but he’d completely forgotten to actually do it.

As he was thinking Hannibal jumped, pulling himself into darkness. No drastic change in the noise, the people must be further in.

Hannibal's head reappeared like a bad magic trick, motioning him up with a nod. Taking a last look at the tall wall behind, a hand enclosed his bicep, Will turned facing forward, jumping with the flat part of his forearm placed onto the ledge to haul himself into blackness.

As he passed through the window, his nose stuttered on an inhale, throat closing at the urge to gag. His hands rose to cover his nose and mouth automatically.

Eyes slower than his nose. Blinking away what looked like static, the room came into focus alongside a crushing feeling of doom.

Chipped Bars barricaded the front wall, a dented iron bed and grossly overflowing steel toilet the sole furniture in the space. faeces and unknown body emissions decorated the floors in earth tones. They had arrived in the Prison sector.

All incarcerated at the institute had committed a criminal offence, but the prison sector was the worst of the worst. Those too dangerous for any freedom.

Will felt deep sympathy for Hannibal, the pain of having superior smell in what was essentially a sewer.

Studying him further he noted no visible recognition to this area. Not even the Ripper was housed here. This wasn't unexpected though, from what he'd gathered his stay bore more relevance to an uncomfortable vacation than a punishment.

Cautiously Will prowled around the faeces stopping a careful distance away from the bars. Spying out.

A large kidney shaped hole in the metallic ceiling of the building spotlighted the lower floor. The building was cast in a blue tint not helped by the off white walls, painted with mold. He couldn't focus further, instincts caught on the nearest threat. There were people in the cells across from them.

They weren't moving, not even to shiver in the frigid air. An older man was sprawled on the floor of his cell, bare arms against icy cement, fingers just hanging threw the bars.

"Are their doors locked?" Will whispered to Hannibal, feeling heat as he pressed lightly against his left side.

"They are on the path of starving to death." Hannibal's tone was off Will noticed, how curious.

"How long do they have?" The riots started three days ago. Not enough time to die, but enough to look truly desperate.

"Hm, now that depends on a lot of factors-"Hannibal stopped himself, there were endless stipulations WIll could probably figure out himself "but without water the weak may be dead as the dawn breaks tomorrow"

"I wouldn't want to go like that." Will couldn't stop himself saying, it was the worse phycological torture, Slow and painful.

"Fate is not kind." Hannibal murmured.

Not partial to the same saviour complex as Will, he was observant in catching they could be in the same position. Moving forward to push at their cell door, for a jarring moment it stuck. Will held his breath as he caught on. Hannibal twisted his body harder, it creaked, thankfully sliding open.

An open door and broken window, someone had come through here. Using some foothold to climb up the brick wall behind. No use following the traces of what was sure to be a dead man's journey he stopped himself looking for more evidence, just in time to catch someone walking towards them.

His feet quickly stepped back, watching carefully as a young man skipped towards them. Will averted his eyes holding his breath, but the man stopped, face protruding thru the bars of the cell. He had warm brown hair, dark freckles disappearing under thin scabs across his nose and neck. small eyes a murky green.

“Hii!” The man cried, hand snaking between the bars, fingers grabbing air, “Hii! I want to help you!” His high pitched voice reverberated around the small cell.

Will kept rules to ensure his survival, don’t trust, conserve water ect ect. Some he’d been forced to change since meeting Hannibal, but one he would never abrogate on was to stay silent and undetected. He cringed at the echoes of the man's voice flew around the building, everyone in this hell knew where they were. Starving eyes watched from afar.

“That's very kind of you, can you please show us the way out.” Hannibal asked, stepping forward.

“No you mustn't do that,” The man snapped, licking his lips, “We have to stay here, I can help, I helped Jake!, I did! he said I did.”

“You’ve done very well, but me and my friend are permitted to leave this building,” Hannibal returned easily, The man's face scrunched up confused “I am a doctor.” Hannibal affirmed reaching and gripping his dirty hand still outstretched in their cell.

Will looked on in horror. Pretending to be staff, a death sentence to the wrong people. Thumbing his fleece, he realised they were both in staff clothes. As soon as possible they had to change. Naked would be safer. He thought he might have his inmate t-shirt underneath screw freezing to death, but pulling his collar revealed a small pink t-shirt, the lone top in that wardrobe. He pulled his inmate jacket closed

“Doctor, I am James.” The man proclaimed with perfect straight teeth, Will let out a breath, he believed them and it was favorable.

“Come come,” James cried, running and pointing over the shiny railing to the lower floor.

Hannibal followed stepping out. WIll did the same looking to either side first, no one else was on this boardwalk. Their cell door rolled back.

“There!” James shouted, faces looked up towards them.

Will quickly counted six people outside their cells.

Rainwater had evidently fallen threw the hole in the roof, flooding the east side. A sunken shadow facedown in the middle.

He connected the uproar with the person. A man viciously impounding his own skull against a pillar there was the thudding, audible even from outside the building. A rocking dark haired man was the wailing, every few seconds they'd scream, not dissimilar to a police siren. Will flinched as it came again, gritting his teeth.

A long blue door was ajar to the far left, a clear exit. He felt relief, itching to leave. Now they just needed to get down.

"Thank you for your help." Hannibal said, smiling politely. Will forced his own.

"Can't go down!" James lunged fingers sunk under Will's arm pulling him forward. He looked back at Hannibal as he was dragged. No help?

He ran them over to a mass of crushed strange metal stretching all the way down to the ground floor.

"Can't go down." He repeated. Will got in a better stance as James stopped them dangerously close to a drop. Stepping onto the pile to his right was nothing. Peering down Will judged it wasn't necessarily a death sentence, but you wouldn't be walking for a while.

Clued in by the railing just visible under the junk Will realised this was where the stairs were. Would they really be unable to go down? They hardly had another option. Prisons weren't built with many exits.

"How unfortunate" Hannibal surveyed arching his neck elegantly forward.

It was a mess of white, greys and black with a natural slope, sliding would probably not kill them although the metal looked rough, jagged like it'd been torn off something larger.

"So you jump" flat palms hit Will's shoulder blades, feet jumping forward, the descent loomed, stomach dropping as he tilted.

He flailed his right arm behind him just able to get a grip on the railing, he pushed back motioning his entire body behind it, The assault stopped, he looked shocked back into confused eyes, James honestly believed he was helping.

"Why didn't you go," James asked, hands reaching back into dangerous place.

"No!" WIll said reflexively feeling his broken nail splinter further, cutting into the skin below. His heart was flying. Adrenaline polluting his thoughts.

"That railing is another option," Hannibal cut in nodding over to the right.

Following his eyeline to the other side of the room, threw the fading sunlight a railing had broken, falling down in rustic mimicry of a ladder.

Will quickly traced it for weaknesses, if the base was stable it'd work.

Finally dangerous hands fell from his back. He quickly created distance.

Keeping his body tense had strained his abdomen, he tuned out whatever Hannibal and his new friend were talking about pushing it like a bruise. The ache was traveling down his left thigh, he rubbed the area, muscles tight.

“How is the wound Will?” Hannibal's smooth voice chipped, He snapped his head up, Hannibal was close, eyes trailing up from his feet. He watched as his gaze came back to his face meeting his eyes.

“fine” He responded eyebrow arched.

He waited for Hannibal to lead, trailing behind to walk away the ache.

“Thanks for saving me from the bungee jump” He couldn’t help muttering to his back, maybe he was being too generic but usually people acted to defend their... friends from the threat of death.

“I believed you strong enough to escape on your own.” Hannibal responded evenly.

“Isn’t that nice.” Will countered. Kissing the guy didn’t change his personality, if it came to it, he’d have watched his fall.

Aware of the eyes from below. Will kept a pointless watch as Hannibal started the climb down. If the inmates below started to attack there wasn’t much he could do from above, he thought holding his breath.

Thankfully no one rushed forward or moved in their direction. Inmates conscious enough to look over wore dead eyes. Animals trapped in a zoo for too many years, they’d lost hope they could exist elsewhere. Their families and homes long gone.

Unsure how much weight the railing could take, Will waited till Hannibal reached the bottom before turning to go down. It would have been slippery had his painful cuts not provided some twisted friction against the cold metal.

“No don’t leave me!” screamed James, the echo ripping threw the building “Come back up, Come back now!”

Will looked up limited to what he could see.

“Shut the fuck up!” Someone else screamed from above.

Will kept going, preying James didn’t follow. If he climbed down now the railing could break. Sweat building, he climbed faster almost at the bottom rung.

“NOO!” A rush of dark fabric, a thump as something hit the ground to his right. His eyes locked on the rungs till he reached the bottom, knowing it wasn’t going to be pretty.

He took a breath studying the smooth railing for an unnecessary second before turning.

Head crooked unnaturally, James had fallen on his neck.

Horror dissipated into joy at his quick death. Uncomfortably he recognised he was even jealous, he'd escaped this evil place, even if it was by death.

However this dissipated like smoke as James’s leg kicked, he was still alive!

Weird little cries from a crushed throat. His breath froze in his throat. Was this fixable, what quality of life would he have, what quality of life does anyone have here he thought critically. As the moans rose in volume. He made his decision.

He reached into his pocket, fingers closing around the loop in the scissors handle. Not ideal for this. He looked over at Hannibal, that stupid amused expression he always wore present, eying the man like a wolf finding the weak within a pack of sheep.

“Knife.” he demanded, a bloody hand held out. Hannibal opened his mouth but Will glared, daring Hannibal to deny him. Will watched him surrender, knife sliding out.

Will did it quickly, slitting James’s broken neck. He tried to shut his mind down, but tingles flowed threw his body as the blood poured.

A rainbow of reds and oranges coated the floor cleaning the filth. Life itself. Blood forgave and healed. His burning hands reached for the balm, when a hand grabbed his.

Pulling back Hannibals face stared down.

“You have open wounds WIll, you mustn’t touch his blood” He blinked, standing up, the body resting on him flopped down, small cries barely audible over the chaos.

The scream from the rocking man hit, locating it easily to his left. Black hair reached almost to the man's bare arms, matted in a clump on one side, it had the potential to be so beautiful. His expression was haunting, he was terrified on him. Bloodshot eyes on what he'd done.

“Will can you tell me three things you see?” Hannibal asked one hand cupping his chin to face him, fingertips grazing stubble.

Annoyed Will recognised the grounding exercise, but he’d play along. He didn’t feel very present, the colours were all wrong.

“I see umm..you, broken men, dead men” He finished, forcing himself to look at Hannibal, already his thoughts were coming clearer. Hannibal never overwhelmed WIll with his emotions. His manipulations useful for once.

“Thank you, could you tell me three things you can feel?” Hannibal asked.

“Hannibal we should move-” Will responded there were people behind them moving free, he could feel their presence, another just in front, stumbling around.

“Answer me please.” Hannibal responded, not taking his eyes away

“I feel water seeping into my shoe, my abdomen fucking hurts, and I guess you.” He said, the hand on his chin moved respectively rubbing up. Breaking Hannibal's hold on his face he looked down at his black inmate trainers submerged to the laces in the dark rainwater. Hannibal of course was just missing the foot spa. WIll stepped out, shaking his foot, relieved he wasn’t near the sunken body in the middle.

“And Will what-”

“Hannibal I think we both know it smells like shit in here, ect ect can we please just get going.” Will snapped, He quickly realised he might have pushed back too hard but Hannibal’s expression didn’t change. What would it take for the ripper to get angry. It was almost tempting to figure out, A dark part throbbed to push and push until his expression fell and revealed whomever was behind the mask.

“Would you like to display him?” Hannibal asked, drawing Wills attention back to James now dead on the floor. Will groaned embarrassed at his instability. There were much more pressing issues. Primely the other inmates.

He handed the knife back to Hannibal hilt first, spitefully not wiping the blood off, it dripped, staining Hannibal's grip crimson.

“I want to get out of here.” He replied, ignoring the body.

“As you wish.” Hannibal said, rubbing the blade along his dark slacks before sheathing. He sounded vaguely disappointed, was he holding him back.

“If you wanted him, I wouldn’t stop you.” Will said shuffling forward. Hannibal laughed.

“Thank you WIll, however you are right-” Hannibal paused looking around distastefully “it does smell like shit in here.”

A laugh barked involuntarily from him, breaking the tense atmosphere, more eyes turned their way, but it was still worth it, fuck.

“I love it when you swear,” Will laughed, getting himself under control. Hannibal beamed.

His estimate of six outside their cells was wrong. Spinning he recounted seven and four dead people. Three of the people were looking at them, the other four were very mentally unstable, he doubted they had any contact with reality. No awareness he and Hannibal were even passing.

They stepped on, walking towards the open door.

A man hidden in the dark overhang darted, Will intercepted Hannbal reaching for his knife, gripping tight under his arm to push Hannibal further out of the way. A boney shoulder just clipped Wills, mercifully that area was pretty numb from an old gunshot injury anyway. The man didn’t stop, his head cracked into the thin wall between the cells. Collapsing into a moaning pile. His eyes were bloody, nails also. Completely bald.

“The engines prime lab rats” Hannibal whispered, as they moved past the shaking people.

A group of three were huddled, interlocked with each other, the youngest, who appeared to be only a teenager, was contorted, lips glued to the man on his lap's forehead. Dreadlocks hanging on with thin threads trailing the rancid floor.

“Chilton's favourites” Will agreed.

They reached the thick blue door. Adjar, they could both slide threw. Immediately disappointed at the dim hallway rather than sunlight.

Half of the doors were visible with the light from the other room. Curious Will stepped to the first door. Sturdy but nothing like the cell doors encountered previously, he turned the handle. It opened like butter.

Screens lit up the room, thousands of knobs, filling a wall. He forgot to look further as he met lidded eyes staring up from the floor.

“huh...Leave, I am sleeping, LEAVE!” The man shouted, skeletal fingers covering his eyes. Will shut the door obeying. There wasn’t an exit through there anyway. Will noticed Hannibal’s hand looped into his knife sheath, glad he was taking this seriously.

Worried about more friends, they avoided the other doors, striding into darkness to the biggest at the end. Like a moth Will fixated on light coming from the thin space under the Gigantic door.

Clumsily Will pawed down to what felt like a steel handle, Finding the end before bearing down.

It didn’t move.

His heart sunk but he continued on, pushing harder, rising to his tip toes to add more weight.

“Hey, try this handle” He whispered, moving aside, Hannibal coordinated his body, stance profesional. Will heard a crunch. His sigh of relief was short lived. No light flooded in. It stayed shut.

“There could be something pushed up against the other side?” Will theorised aloud, shoulder pushing against the door as Hannibal wrenched the handle.

“Can you feel any other locks?” Hannibal asked. A pitter patter sound echoed as their hands felt the door

“Would they put internal locks on a prison door?” Will asked, mind whirring. Surely there would be too much risk if the patients had access to an internal lock. They wouldn't risk a Inmate hostage situation. The locks would be external. It was the only theory that made sense, Although he wasn't exactly knowledgeable in this area, especially with Chilton's awful decision making, even he couldn't predict that dick head.

“if the riots started somewhere else in the institute, to prevent further chaos they would've locked these doors.” Will finished. Everyone incarcerated in the Prison block was still here (whether dead or alive) the riots couldn't have started here or this block would be empty or near enough.

Hannibal stopped pushing evidently agreeing with his assessment.

His earlier statement rolled back into the forfront of his thoughts. Prisons weren’t typically built with more than one exit.

By the way for those who havent seen outlast here is a still from the game

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading, I decided to split this chapter into two as it was getting too long, the next chapter should be up within the week :D

Please leave your comments and Kudos,

Thank you <3

I really enjoyed writing this chapter

Do not wake me again

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Darkness blurred Hannibal's expression. Concluding he couldn't be seen in turn he allowed his eyes to shut, forehead pushing the heavy door.

"We'll return and keep looking."

"The Prison, or Staff Sector?" Wills words were muffled, lips centimeters from their barrier.

"There might be more options here," Hannibal answered smoothly, footsteps casing off.

The uplifting words fell flat, Stress wrecked his thinking, Squeezing his eyelids tight he couldn't fight the blatant certainty that this was the sole exit.

An opening door wooshed, interrupting his circular thoughts. Will froze. Relaxing just as quickly as Hannibal's shadow disappeared into the adjacent room.

He straightened up but didn't follow.

A minute elapsed before Hannibal reappeared, moving swiftly to the next door. Curious Will trailed.

A dank windowless cube.

The room was barely visible over a large ashen desk, so cumbersome it was awkward to get round. Thigh muscles pulling tight, Will placed his foot up, kicking stuff off as he stepped over to reach the shelves behind.

"No respect for others' work." Hannibal joked, looking through an old filing cupboard located against the right wall. At least Will hoped he was joking, it would be like Hannibal to get upset at that.

"Work? I'm sure-," He reached down, gathering the pile into his arms to dump back onto the table. Picking up a sheet at random he squinted threw dim light "-the employee evaluations are still essential." Curious with little else to do, Will kept flicking, hunching over. The notebook was as expected: Appointments, Strings of thought, Shopping lists, he ate a lot of meat, potentially an alcoholic.

Thick paper was slipped between two pages in the middle. He plucked it, tilting to catch the light. A letter of resignation. Bored, his eyes skimmed the page, "- *since Reba left felt unwelcome within the staff-couldn't deal with patient aggression-"* .

He twisted his fingers feeling another sheet behind, it mirrored the other in layout, but his eyes feasted. They were threatening them.

Unable to hide his surprise, He alerted Hannibal.

“It's nothing-” He waved his hand nonchalantly, this was hardly crucial information.

Hannibal was still moving, coming to peer over his shoulder.

He sighed explaining “-It’s a threat from an employee, if the experiments don’t stop more staff would quit. I’m just- surprised, I never thought the staff cared” Will explained, re-reading her words.

She was listed as a personal nurse to *Francis Dolahyde* .

“The Dragon.” Hannibal's breath moved strands of his hair. He sounded excited, did he know him?

“Dragon?” He echoed contorting himself to face him.

Hannibal smiled, going back to the filing cabinet, lugging the same drawer open to flick through big lumps of documents. Printed names labeled them, Inmate files Will guessed.

Finally Hannibal gripped one, using both hands to shimmy it out. *Dolahyde.F* was faded in grey. Hannibal held it out to him, orange fibres from the tacky material puffed into the air

Uncomfortable with the grainy texture he swiped it open. Medication lists and allergies he shuffled past coming to sets of police reports, assuming this is what Hannibal wanted him to read, he twisted it to catch the light.

“Oh the Tooth Fairy.” Otherwise self labeled the Great Red Dragon.

Will had never worked the case. Wrong state, but he’d killed hundreds. Home and life insurance had gone up all over America, After the *Mummy Massacre* as it was crudely dubbed his ex-wife Molly had insisted on installing outside cameras on their house. Always fearing the wrong things.

The Red Dragon was here. Trapped with them inside this building. A headache built gathering in his temples.

Done with surprising him Hannibal revolved back to the shelves behind.

Will read on; Violent inclinations, Multiple personalities, Dysphoria jumped out from his psych reports.

Just over a year ago the first report was dated. Will was astonished at his remorse, kindness and empathy, yet as he shuffled to the latest in his file, these traits had been crushed. Stuck in a violent manic state, crippled by hatred. Clearly what a year on the Engines serum had done. Congratulations Chilton you made a serial killer worse Will thought, sending a private one finger salute to wherever that man was, hopefully three feet under.

The Ripper and the Dragon though, that connection was fascinating.

Hannibal finished with his search, politely took the folder from Will.

“You recognised that name a bit too quickly Dr Lecter, especially for someone incarcerated while he reigned.” Will tutted, leaning back against the desk.

Hannibal reopened the file pulling out the photo copied pictures from the police report.

“I kept well informed.” He smirked. Cheap paper turned dead bodies into doll-like figures, they flew as delicate hands shuffled.

“By the source?” Will asked, Hannibal just smiled.

Hearing that name was frightening. The Great Red Dragon. He couldn’t deny this had spooked him. He talked himself down quickly; Pulling any file would probably be startling. Everyone here dark and dangerous. Hell he’d shacked up with the Chesapeake ripper. Funny enough this didn’t make him feel much better.

The only real balm was that he was most likely trapped in one of the cells starving to death.

He rubbed his hand up his face, pulling at his beard as he thought. With the players in this game they had a time limit.

“We could carry some of this furniture back to climb the wall” Will offered, unable to fully hide his distaste for his own plan. Only a ruin would await them. However going backwards may be their only option.

“We’ll explore more, see what we are working with.” Hannibal repeated putting the file back, It wasn’t surprising to see him honour the alphabetisation instead of dumping it like Will would have.

“The longer we stay here-,” he cut himself off at risk of arguing in circles. “-to blend in, we need to find new clothes.”

“We are at no risk, they’ve destroyed themselves so they cannot destroy us.” Hannibal answered striding up the corridor.

He supposed vacant eyes didn’t show much perception. So long as they weren't dressed like the doctors who abused them they’d be okay he decided, accepting Hannibal's evaluation.

Will held back, kneeling to look under the desk, he’d been sure whomever owned this office would have stashed alcohol somewhere, but the obvious spots were empty.

The rest of the rooms in the corridor were disappointingly locked or useless.

His hopes soared at a shower block, but the water ran black. The room decrypt

They ended back in the main prison. Will was thankful for the broken ceiling. Even with twilight setting in, it lit the area, a navy hue filtering their vision.

Answering invisible calls three of the men preyed, legs submerged into the puddle outlined in light, latched upwords. Will cringed as the water rippled with their spasms, icy water on bare thighs.

Werewolves or pagans came to mind, but sadly he couldn’t see the moon yet threw the broken ceiling.

Another night began in the madhouse.

Visually sweeping the Prison, blanketed by his thick hair the screaming man shivered himself asleep.

The men laid together hadn’t moved either.

His empathy wasn’t lying, they’d be safe for now.

They spent the next hour slowly scouring the bottom floor. Splitting up Will took the left side. Stepping into any unoccupied cells.

Fixated by the Dragon's presence he couldn’t relax. But the mental strain of piecing together the miserable lives of those doomed to starve to death was exhausting, linking his guesses to his limited knowledge of the dragon. He couldn’t quite make himself stop, but was able to tone it to just surface level assumptions. The dragon wasn’t shy, if he saw him, he’d know he reasoned.

A grizzly site was the dead, piled up on the floor in the last cell. He forced himself to explore, ignoring the evidence of what'd been done to them. Back facing the rot.

Finished, he closed the door leaving them in peace. It clicked before making an odd cranking sound.

Startled at the unexpected noise Will stopped, turning slowly back to the handle. It wouldn't reopen.

Once closed did the cells lock? Had the cell door they'd entered first shut? His stomach dropped like a stone. Shock making him shake, If so, there would be no retracing their steps. They would truly be trapped.

He reached for the handle of the next open cell throwing it closed, arms screaming at his jerky actions. As soon as it clanked shut, he tried, but like the previous cell it wouldn’t reopen.

Hannibal was making his way down the opposing cells.

“The doors lock when shut-” Will forced a breath stepping into the cell Hannibal was in “-we need to go up and see if we still have a way out”

Hannibal's eyes snapped to the door, Will realised as he did that in exploring cells they could have easily locked themselves away, adding further danger.

Hannibal blinked, before continuing searching, pushing protruding stones to see if they moved.

Watching impatiently, Will was aware how simple it would be to slide that door closed and recapture the Ripper. From where he was crouched Hannibal gave him a sideways glance as if aware of his thoughts, he smiled back, baring his teeth.

He sposed there was no real need for Hannibal to be there, he could climb up alone. But it was safer like this, espechally with the dragon hiding somewhere. He couldn't take risks. Thankfully Hannibal was rising to his feet.

“Well, proceed.”

“Thank you.” Will bit, walking quickly back to their makeshift ladder.

Distracted, the calf of his leg brushed one of the preying men.

The reaction was instantaneous. The man flinched throwing himself desperately into the lake, a gush of water rose into the air, rushing out in a wave. As the water settled large eyes peered from the centre.

“I’m sorry” Will offered, ignoring the icy rush of water dripping down his legs.

Unable to percieve a threat he began to climb.

Without waiting for Hannibal to also ascend, he chased the wind barreling through the boardwalk.

He could just see the open window through the darkness of their cell, a luminous black square.

Heart sinking the door was flush in its frame. He pressed on regardless, sliding the handle down, but as expected. They had let it shut, never to be reopened.

“Fuck.” He murmured, arms wide to trick creeping claustrophobia.

He allowed himself to collapse, folding sore legs, spine slotting between chipped bars.

Spotless brogues made their way closer, bending down beside him.

They didn’t speak. Both inside their own heads.

The Prison was just supposed to be temporary, a pass through.

Through the dark blur of his thoughts he wondered why Hannibal hadn’t also tested the door, he knew he would, had their situations been reversed.

He massaged his temples, imagining the veins loosening.

“Are you hungry Will?” Hannibal asked. In his peripheral Hannibal shuffled to face him, legs neatly folded.

“I guess.” His stomach cramped with the sudden attention.

Foreshadowed by emaciated inmates, he contemplated their sudden lack of food or water. Their mortal stopwatch ended at three days if Hannibal was to be believed.

He’d quietly suspected the roaming inmates were drinking from the puddle with the dead body inside. Surely that was a quicker way to die.

He pulled out the insides of his pockets, placing it on top of his legs to avoid contact with the sordid ground. He’d carried a water bottle and some energy bars for a while but he must have used them. Hannibal stared, assessing his hoard. Will hoped the dark impaired his eyesight, self continuous at the megar assortment of crap.

Following his lead Hannibal pulled out a scalpel, wire, cereal bar, matches, alongside medical paraphernalia.

Had he expected to be leaving that quickly from the staff secter, he’d have stolen more.

The cereal bar was pushed at him, Will followed the hand back surprised.

“Eat Will, you need it more than me, you are healing.” Firm hands squeezed Wills fingers around the bar. He was being given their only food.

“Just because you are used to starving doesn't mean you are resistant.” He returned, twisting the bar back to be greeted by a sharp stare, was he finally realising the un-fortune in empathy Will wondered. It wasn’t hard to infer. Trauma was the easiest to pick up on, also Will didn’t think you needed a degree to infer Hannibal had some issues surrounding food.

“half each.” He countered when Hannibal didn’t react further. Uncaring of hygiene he snapped half off with dirty fingers giving Hannibal the portion still in its wrapper.

He bit into his share laying back. Like chewing sawdust, he could barely taste anything. It was sticking to his cheeks, drying out his mouth.

“Starving is hardly likely, one only needs to be creative” Hannibal finally spoke, clearing his throat.

“Oh yeah, I suppose cannibalism will come into fashion here, if it hasn’t already.” Will said wondering if he’d be first or last on Hannibal’s menu. He couldn’t summon much energy to care, maybe finally he’d been corrupted enough to not believe Hannibal would hurt him or maybe he’d just given up.

“That’s one choice, however if you want to be friendly there are many edible insects attracted to this place, birds as well have come in, there was a carcass downstairs.”

Hannibal had a point, with the death and body emissions here they must be surrounded by creatures. But he was surprised, not expecting Hannibal of all people to suggest the bug route this early, but the man was a survivor.

The last bite of cereal scratched down his throat. His stomach groaned, lecturing him that it hadn’t been enough. But the burn was tolerable for now. There were bigger concerns.

Arms knocking together, Will realised they were shivering. What he would give for a warm bed right now, a warm meal, central heating. Exhaling he shut his eyes. Meditating briefly to find his centre. He had to find a way out of here. It was finally quiet enough he could think.

He took deep breaths, five seconds in, holding it for five, then breathing out for seven.

Thoughts rushed, he pinpointed the prison.

To be obvious a clear way out was the broken ceiling. They could use rope attached to the edge to climb out. But he discarded the idea as quick as it came. It was most likely caused by something being thrown, something that vulnerable wouldn’t be stable enough to carry their weight.

Could they break their way out? Attack a wall or window until it caved. There was evidence of that working already. The window they came in for one, broke with.. Will paused re-seeing the window, bars neatly cut. Someone had heavy tools. He saw an outline, by the slant they were cut from the outside-

Whomever cut the window hadn't exited threw that window, they had entered, just like them. And if someone had come in that way with the tools necessary, they'd also come out a similar way.

"There is another exit here" Will said head rising quickly

"How do you know Will?"

"Someone was able to break apart the window we came through. The main exit has been locked since the outbreak, so they wouldn't have been able to walk out, but they could break out. There must be another exit." Will said hoping he was making sense to Hannibal, sometimes his assumptions came out too random for people to believe him. Although there was clear evidence here, Hannibal was smart.

"Amazing." Hannibal's eyes reflected off the thin light, beaming at Will.

Will left him standing suddenly.

"Where do you suspect the person left from?" Hannibal asked, rising.

"East side on the top floor." He answered, seeing their path. They wouldn't venture downstairs; It was a needless risk and partially underground, they'd want to get out of the dead end courtyard, and the east side was closest to their cell.

"I agree." Hannibal nodded, walking alongside him to the east.

Will preyed the cell would be open, but his unlucky streak rang true.

Directly up from the makeshift ladder in a locked cell there was empty space where the bars of the window should be. Similar to the cell they came in.

He was getting real tired of the dull thud of pushing a locked door. He'd been right, but yet to gain anything.

Wills analytical mind spun, he had a paperclip, it was just manipulating pins, weirder things had happened. But in the darkness he couldn't feel a keyhole.

"There will be no lock, no key to find."

Will waited for the rest of the sentence, but he didn't continue. Rage burned, another game?

"Magnets?" he played along out of growing desperation.

"Electric." Hannibal answered turning to the door, he smirked, catching Wills slipping patience, continuing unprompted this time "As you've noticed the general electrics have gone down, lights, heating and so forth, but there's an emergency catch where should the system short circuit such as in a fire, the doors would be released," Hannibal took a long breath "there must be a separate generator still working, break that and you'll open the door."

"Thank you Sherlock." Will mocked, he leant his ear down next to the handle, expecting to hear humming, but nothing. Was Hannibal right? Why would he know.

Oh, his lips pulled up.

“Must have foiled your escape plan when you were placed elsewhere.” If Hannibal was surprised to be figured out he didn’t show it “how many manuels did you have to read to find that titbit.”

“There were 21 possible locks, of course I focussed on the cheapest, I’m actually relieved that time was not wasted.”

Will smirked, deciding to trust him, not like he had a lot of choices.

“Wait- why didn’t you remember this before, when we were despairing about our cell being shut.” He wished he’d worded it better, if so he could have sussed out Hannibal's motive.

“As much as it pains me I am human, I do forget sometimes.” Hannibal responded evenly.

Whatever, he avoided Hannibal's eyes, he didn't have the energy. They needed to break the circuit.

“Hand me the matches”

“That won’t work, we don’t know where the sensor is, you’d have to set the whole place on fire before you got close to your goal.”

“Tell me then. How do we do this.” He asked through gritted teeth.

“We find the generator,” Hannibal answered, not fazed by his anger. For a serial killer Will couldn’t help thinking what surprising patience he had. “The downstairs corridor, wires ran through the ceiling, it's most likely there.”

“okay.” Will agreed, glad he had a plan to focus on.

They quickly made their way down. Eyes reflected from the cells.

He stopped suddenly turning to the taller man

“All the cells will open. Not just ours,” Hannibal didn’t look surprised, He supposed he should have realised sooner “it will be a slaughter.”

“Hm I’d like to see him.” Hannibal said in reference to the dragon. Will arched an eyebrow, confused at the certainty of his presence, he didn’t like this.

“Well I don’t.” He bit back, “hopefully he’ll target the cuddling men in the corner first, too familial for his tastes.”

Hannibal’s hand curled around his jacket covered arm to guide him back to the looming blue door.

Their necks arched following wires stapled crudely to the ceiling, arriving at the first door, it just had to be that one, Will paused.

Hannibal was waiting, eyes on him.

He checked behind, no one had followed.

“Can you please just- take care of it.” Will whispered. The man hadn’t done anything to him, they were the bad guys. However they couldn’t afford peace, it was too easy to be ambushed. He

couldn’t risk losing Hannibal or dying here. He could trust Hannibal to do what he did best. Kill. He felt sick at the power rush as Hannibal nodded lips peeling up.

“I’ll kill him, but don’t forget who chose his fate” Hannibal taunted.

It wasn’t too late to call it off. But his mouth couldn’t open. Time slowed as the door slid open.

He didn’t immediately wake up. Will watched as the door swung closed, shouting tearing through the corridor, shutting off into sudden silence.

Will shook, he felt wet, cold sweat gathering down his arms. He’d doomed another.

He pulled his beard reenacting grounding exercises. Again Hannibal had killed for him, it benefitted him as well Will reminded himself. This wasn’t completely selfless.

What would Hannibal's reaction be if he asked him to kill the dragon he wondered, get that problem out of the way immediately,

Hannibal couldn’t over power the dragon, the physique of that man, he’d seen the evidence of his muscles in horrible use in the police reports.

Poison or some sort of long range weapon like a gun would be most effective Will decided, although he’d never seen this in the Chesapeake rippers kills. The man wanted to be physically there, otherwise what was the point in killing. He craved-

The door reopened Hannibal striding out, he certainly looked happy.

“Done?” WIll asked evenly

“The generator is off, it was in a cage but the key was in the lock.” Hannibal smiled, motioning them forwards, Will nodded trying to shake off lingering horror.

“Later if we get some breathing room, will you tell me your escape plan from here?” Will asked, eager to distract himself. He also wanted clues on why Hannibal had given up on an escape.

“Hmm, I would be interested in your critiques.”

They reached the adjar blue door quickly, The lack of noise not reflective of the horror about to occur.

WIll slid threw first, leaving enough room for Hannibal.

Weak lamb-like legs tripped forwards. Open space where cell bars once were.

Two had come out into the centre. Will watched the closest. He was completely naked dressed only in his beard. Blinking rapidly at where you could just see the start of the moon, threw the hole in the ceiling.

He’d had the moon at his side all his life, dancing at his wedding, when police cars teared up his driveway and now partnered with the Chesapeake Ripper, it laughed at him also.

Mimicking the men's success, others tried their bars. At once a hoard descended from their cages. Soon he couldn’t see the railing through the people.

Shouts and exclamations rang out, a thud as a dark haired man dropped to his knees, nails scraping the floor as if to hold on.

The screamer rang over the chaos, woken up by the hoard Will assumed.

His eyes flicked to Hannibal but the man was no longer here, looking further he could just see the back of his grey jumper.

He took a cautious first step, thankful when no heads turned towards him.

Feeling like an unfortunate protagonist in a zombie movie he crept his way round the people, avoiding outstretched arms. He tripped over one man sliding around on his stomach but managed to steady himself in time.

Ducking sideways he met familiar black matted hair facedown on the floor. Anticipating another eerie scream Will tensed, However none came. A deadly amount of thick blood pooled around his trainers, slightly more luminescent then the flat black of the fabric, originating from underneath the screamer.

How arresting the man had been since Will entered the prison he felt an irritating urge to find out his fate. He held his breath, using the tip of his shoe to flip him over, the skeletal body flopping easily.

Popped eyeballs. Viscous white and red fluid filling the empty cavity. He'd seen this before, flying through the air shuffled in Hannibal's hands. The Dragons work.

There the evidence was, as expected. They'd freed the Dragon.

Knuckles slapped his back.

He spun watching the nearest people. Breathing deeply to try and keep a clear head. The blood was dark, so it was estimated to have happened at least 5 minutes ago, the closest people-

"Hannibal is not meant for someone so weak" Putrid breath came over his shoulder, he flinched as fingers tipped with jagged nails pinched his neck. A foot tapping his as the monster moved closer.

"Francis" he stated needing confirmation who he was dealing with. Finger tips rocked, nails ripping his skin.

"Francis is dead!" The Dragon screamed.

Ear burning, He let out a breath. Strangely calm.

So the split personality believed he'd killed the other.

The Dragon wanted Hannibal. With some hesitation he didn't think this was sexual or romantic. It was lonely being a savage killer.

"He said you were strong, but you're not proving a challenge," He rasped

Will felt cold, a good ally lost. Hannibal had found and talked to him. Discussing Will apparently. He'd take it as a compliment but the Dragon would and had taken it as a challenge, as Hannibal intended.

Surveying his court Hannibal was leaning over the balcony, arms straight to either side, legs crossed. Tiger eyes watching. They were his entertainment, a fight for his attention.

Blood coated Will's cheek as he bit deep. He refused to play this game. The prize wasn't worth it. He could no longer fear losing Hannibal, he didn't need him to survive here. Hannibal was drawing his death closer.

If the Dragon was that fixated on Hannibal it would be a good divergent. Hannibal wasn't the only one with a silver tongue.

"Be careful what you wish for," his voice came out raspier, shoulders high "He wants to see you fall." Francis may have been intelligent but the Dragon was easily swayed.

"He understands me-" The Dragon hissed. Grip losing strength, but Will knew he couldn't move yet.

Not knowing the face standing behind him though was making this worse, his always over expansive mind conjuring a literal monster.

He had to get the dragon to move away on his own. Like a dog, running would only make him chase.

"Hannibal has only ever thought of himself, the dragon would eclipse him."

Did Hannibal ever intend on Will getting out of here alive? He'd read patient documents, Victims had described him as a friend, right before they'd ended up butchered on his plate.

He could feel happy eyes boring through his skull from above.

"Francis was the one who liked him," Will pushed knowing the talk of Francis would spark something in the dragon "You must have known he wouldn't pick well."

From his peripheral, a snout shook from side to side "Don't speak to Francis!"

"There are more here who need a catalyst then I" At this he felt the Dragon twitch, feet picking up. As assumed he'd made his targets long before Will got here.

This was the best chance he was gonna get. He began his escape.

He took three long steps before he was soaring through the air. The Dragon's strength was ridiculous.

He fell onto his back, Amazed he hadn't hit anyone. Thick layers saving his bones, he was only winded.

Hearing heavy huffs coming he jolted to his feet, lunging for their makeshift ladder. It was between him and a storming dark haired monstrous man he assumed was the Dragon.

It was no longer an option. There was only one other choice.

The ruined stairs looked steeper from the bottom. Furniture slotted together, and was that part of the roof?

Feeling phantom claws he reached for a crooked sink hauling himself up.

Kicking something away from clutching his foot, he threw himself forwards, abdomen punching a jagged edge, curling in pain he kept going, refusing to look down.

His tight grip on half a bed frame tipped the right side of the stack downwards, he lost his foothold. Metal rained, his hands sunk, just able to grip the railing buried underneath, he swung sideways but didn't follow.

He gasped. Looking up, almost there. He forced himself to keep climbing. Finally he pulled himself above. Feet on firm ground.

A cell swung open in front.

Typical of this endless day, bloody hands curled into his jacket. The nasty face this close was intolerable. His scent was putrid, and considering nobody here smelt like roses that was significant.

He clutched weak wrists to avoid touching split skin. It was effortless to throw him away. Too emaciated to be a challenge.

Another arm shot out of the next cell, he flinched.

Fuck this he thought, beginning to run.

Hannibal's features painted themselves. Eyes gleaming red in the limited light.

"Are you ready to leave?" Hannibal asked neutrality, by the easy going tone you wouldn't know there were multiple murders ongoing in the same room.

Will got his breath back. Nodding minutely.

Under his breast bone rage stewed. It wasn't smart to express it now, but he didn't dismiss it. He wouldn't forget again.

Hannibal swung the cell door with the alternative exit open. The first victory.

They stepped in not observing the room in the hurry to get to the window.

As expected Will identified the same cut marks on the bars. He stopped, letting Hannibal overtake and lean out the window.

Thudding echoed, as someone sprinted past their cell. Will watched them crouching slightly till they disappeared from sight.

Expression weary, Hannibal pulled back. Will pushed past, one hand firm around the sill.

Peering over, his breath exited his lungs at the three story drop.

Which way did that man go then, can't have been down. Too much risk.

Will explored, twisting his head around determined they were missing something. Ah. you could see the edge of the roof from here he realised.

“We go up.” So long as they stayed near the edge, the roof would hold.

A scream of agony warped the building. Will shivered.

Thoughts forcefully repressed he rested his foot on the window ledge, twisting and pulling himself up onto the roof with surprisingly little issue. Bouncing slightly, the roof felt firm.

He raised his head almost falling backwards at the shock of the open sky. The moon was directly above. Seemingly much lower then he’d ever seen before. Craters visible, his eyes blurry at the brightness, tiny pinpricks of stars threatened to fall down on top of them.

Scared, he looked back down.

“Excuse me Will.” Hannibal said tapping his ankle, he stepped aside watching Hannibal's ascent, strong biceps hauling his knee up onto the roof.

Some of the lower floor inside had been underground, so there were sides with only two stories.

They began to sweep the perimeter. He routinely looked up. Unable to forget so soon. His death had been goaded-

Suddenly it hit him there wasn’t ever going to be a correct moment for this. No perfect scene. It was bubbling.

He changed course.

Kidney shaped, the hole in the ceiling looked the same from the other side.

He pulled Hannibal's arm to get his attention, expression lax.

Hannibal looked back. His right hand crept up, gripping Hannibal’s jaw. Middle finger curling around the back of his skull pulling him down onto his lips.

He immediately deepened the kiss, Hannibal frooze. Will clutched him harder, teasing his tongue just over his plush bottom lip. Will could feel him conclude this as adrenaline. Finally responding, quickly matching his desperate energy.

Scarred hands weaved, gripping thick strands of his hair. He moaned, euphoria burning, back arched. He loved hair pulling. Molly used to do it well, he slightly missed the long nails that used to accompany the sensation.

He bit Hannibal's lip. Would Hannibal’s sharp teeth bite deeper. He pushed harder into their kiss.

Foot arching down onto a slant. He remembered, eyes opening.

Swiftly his hand pulled Hannibal's jumper up out of his jeans, if he was bothered by the cold air he didn’t show it.

He twisted Hannibal's body the way he wanted, nails scratching down his ribs. He pressed harder, satisfied when the skin began to give. Hannibal's mouth opened to pant.

Right there.

He punched forward, grip tight around Hannibal’s neck, body suspended backwards over the same hole visible from inside the prison.

Heart raising. Their eyes met with clarity. He couldn’t hesitate.

“Is this the end to a beautiful friendship” Hannibal spoke with whatever available breath he had left.

“You're a risk, I can’t afford.” Will respond without thinking. Hannibal was too good at getting inside his head, why had he allowed him to speak.

“I wouldn’t hurt you Will.” Hannibal said arching an eyebrow despite his precarious position.

Will’s arm shook with the weight, Hannibal's body tipping further. He couldn’t sustain this.

“No, but you would watch. Tell me if the dragon had caught me, would he be the one by your side now.” Will spat, imagining Hannibal's presence watching his death, a sitcom, enjoyable but not particularly memorable.

“Possibly, but I would have mourned your premature death.” Eyes calm as they locked on Will

“We travel together because it is safer, you act to draw my death to me, making this useless,” He spat, there was one final thing “What did you say to the dragon Dr Lecter? if I were to be a gift, I would have liked to have known.”

“Hm, I was merely congratulating him on his becoming, when we used to speak there was more hesitation,” Hannibal said “Of course I would also speak about you, I am so proud.”

Will shivered, he hadn’t seen the Dragon’s face so his mind conjured up the same blurry monstrous image, it was like he was still behind him, hands curling around his neck. Hannibal deserved to feel the same.

His arm dropped, muscles starting to spasm. He shifted his feet, the ceiling sloping minutely inwards.

“You see, I was under a false understanding, we were helping each other get out of here,” Will continued, forgetting the thin roof and leaning closer “I suppose it was my mistake not clarifying, I would like to be alive when we do, not carried around in something's stomach.” Hannibal's eyes dilated. He moved back.

“But wouldn’t you like to be you, not some repressed mimic-” Hannibal started, Wills mind went blank, no they were not having this conversation, seeing his concentration burst Hannibal pressed further, thumb in the wound “Didn’t it feel good to rip apart Tobias Budge, I’m yet to see you reamerge, I’m sure whomever you murdered to get incarcerated saw you at your best.”

“I’m not your entertainment Hannibal!” Will cried, fingers loosening his grip. He took a deep breath. Staring deep into Hannibal's eyes.

Threats were meaningless, if he threatened to kill himself he might have got more of a reaction, not because he could delude himself anymore that Hannibal cared for him but just because of the boring nature of it.

Hannibal had no fear of death. This threat wouldn’t carry. But He couldn’t go back from here. His eyes burned, Threatening Hannibal Lecter, He’d never be safe again.

“Goodbye Hannibal.” He spread out the fingers gripping Hannibal's throat.

With no support Hannibal's body tilted, dropping through the hole.

Screaming into his mind, his body was walking then running to the other side of the building.

His hands came around his ears, terrified of hearing the thump of his body hitting the ground. Would he cry out, scream through his death or die as he lived in complete control.

It was the right thing to do he told himself,

A whisper told him all the ways Hannibal could have saved himself. He might not be dead.

“Shut up” he’d spoken aloud. Visually Sweeping the roof. He was alone. His hand rose to his chest, pushing to feel his ribs shift.

He had to move on.

He came to gazing blearily up. Seems he’d jumped into a high bush, evidently finding where the ground rose to a two story. He let himself sink through the bush, meeting soil.

His face felt cold, touching his cheeks he traced wetness back to his eyes. He blinked in surprise.

What irony, the only one in the entire world who’d mourn him was the one who killed him.

“It was the right thing to do,” He whispered to himself “It was the right thing to do.”

Chapter End Notes

Soo the person who commented they didn't want sad....

Honestly I didn't mean for this chapter to end like this but it wrote itself, WIll is a smart cookie who wouldn't travel with someone who was such a risk.

I'm sorry if i made anyone sad! I promise this isn't the end but a begining.

Please comment your opinions ect even if you hated it,

I even roped in my normie friend to edit, so bless her <3

Lonesome Street

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Emerging from the bush, brittle wooden stems bent for his birth.

Everything looked dull, as if pulled from a low quality video game; a flat stone floor and high brick wall.

Light boomed behind a right turn. Thankful to not be stuck in another dead end, Will walked, feet hidden just behind the wall to peer around.

Floodlights. He blinked rapidly. Eyes burning to diserfer the shape of six men, feet fast on green astro turf.

“To me!”

“Jones, you really fucked that up.”

His eyes traced the basketball court. It was all surprisingly well kept, intact nets and freshly painted white lines. He had a strange deja vu of this court being used in the brochure shoved under his cell door after his hearing.

Two buildings were visible from the court. One accessible by a flat path ahead and another far to the left obscured by trees. He wouldn’t have spotted the other if not for the random lights shining from inside.

Shouts ripped through the court. They’d scoured, Will assumed, watching the crooked ball fall through the basket. It descended quickly to splat apart, teeth scattering across the court. Brunette hair fluttering down.

He retracted his head, pressing each hand slowly against the brick wall. His senses throbbed, overwhelmed. Heavy lids shut without his consent before he forced them open, he couldn’t afford to be reckless. He sucked in a deep breath. Rubbing the tips of his fingers along the grout.

He’d never been able to control his thoughts, no breathing method, drug or activity had ever given him command. But god, he’d bash his head against the wall to stop his thoughts revolving back to Hannibals face. Serine, bizarre in the circumstance, tipping to fall. His acceptance of Will being the one to end the legacy of the Chesapeake ripper. He curled his fingers, bits of brick chipping away beneath his nails.

Body tipping to the side, he staggered forward. He could grieve later, he had to keep moving before someone found him like this.

Each step he took faded the floor as he moved further from the floodlights. One point in the distance shimmered, moonlight reflecting off silver drawing him like an angular fish. Past the bush he'd emerged from, he discovered a series of gated paths. The fences ran forwards into fog disguising its end,

Choosing brains over brawn, he continued onwards, preferring a universal uneven playing field to an outright brawl that the basketball pitch promised to be. A creeping reluctance to go back inside had also formed, as the trauma of almost being locked inside the prison hadn't completely abrogated.

Fog rushed to greet him as he began to walk, Quickly losing his visibility of the entrance behind. Atleast at this point he was only going straight, so was unlikely to become lost.

Jinxing it he came then to a crossroads. He chose the right gate. It could be his imagination but the fog appeared lighter this way.

He braced himself as a barrel of wind came from the left, billowing open his jacket to flap before he clutched the ends. The gates rattled.

Little squishy sounds tapped up from behind, light footsteps on wet grass. He paused for Hannibal to catch up, twisting his head. As his eyes started drawing in the woman's features he remembered he wasn't traveling with Hannibal any longer.

Someone had crept up on him.

He stopped. She also paused, a good sign and bad. Reasonable was better than mindless. But intelligence was a much much worse factor if she was hostile.

He couldn't see details through the dark, just a slim figure, shoulder length hair and puffa coat. She stepped closer, seemingly fascinated.

He inched back "Can i help you." He chanced, reaching quickly into his pocket to squeeze the scissors tight.

She looked wrong, her clothes, attitude, face, like something out of another world.

"My my, is that Will Graham? I was the first journalist in your garage, I've never seen a body so crudely packed into a freezer " A smooth recognisable voice drawled.

Freddie fucking Lounds. His jaw dropped. What were the chances? Meeting her of all people here.

"Did you fly here on your broomstick?" He snapped. A famous trashy journalist. He'd only met her a few times professionally before his incarceration but she'd always brought trouble; sneaking her way onto crime scenes for her gory articles, while corrupting evidence, witnesses and the public "or are you here by court order, finally charged for defamation?"

"I only print the truth- or the most interesting truth." She paused studying him.

The wind picked up. It felt personal, the gates caving, as if bending to reach them. He hunched over, protecting more of his face in his fleece collar.

Bravery or stupidity? To freely walk into a place like this. If the outside was one door away not for all the money in the world would he stay here a second longer. The women had a screw loose.

“How cliche though, an institute experimenting on their patients.” Her doe eyes saw this in print, mass human experimentation, the public would lap this up, in a few years there’ll be tours of this place.

She patted her bag, angling the camera to line up with the murderer, making sure the mic attached to her scarf was hidden, while not being muffled by the fabric.

“Mr Graham, did you try and contact your wife- Oh I’m sorry, your ex wife in the past week?” She asked. Seeing the wince she pressed further into the bloody wound that was his family life “You did file for Divorce correct? Worried about dragging her into it I heard, or was she the one that cleaned up after you?”

Will bit his lip, aware engaging in any of this would only entangle him. Additionally It was bothering him that she wasn’t affected by her surroundings. How did she not understand her situation? How fragile she was.

“Freddie, why on god's earth would I answer you.”

“You were a law man once Will, aren’t you aching for answers?” She asked with unblinking eyes “I could even consider a deal, I may answer a question if you answer mine”

“Let me guess, the other inmates weren’t as talkative,” He drawled. He was concentrating on staying alive, nevermind playing Sherlock on the idiot that started the riots. However, he had a price. If she told him how she’d got here, he could finally be pointed to the exit, no more wandering pointlessly into danger “Fine.” He said, concealing all optimism, too aware of her cruelty.

“Mr Graham, did you try to contact your family- oh- ex-family last week.” She crept closer, face painting itself further into detail, her famous red hair coiling out like blood.

It was the same question as earlier. Deceptively simple.

“I tried to call my lawyer on Tuesday, but no I didn’t try and call- them.” Thinking back to before the riots was bizarre.

She looked disappointed, what was so important? Has something happened? He held himself back from asking, weary of wasting his return question.

“You said *tried* , so you couldn’t get through?”

“Ah you did say one Miss Lounds.” He grinned at the sight of her frustration, feeling borderline cheerful.

“You didn’t fully answer, so this one still counts as mine”

Curious if he’d get another question for his complacency he added “Yes. Tried, the phones were busy.”

“You saw this in person? That every one of the phones were in use?”

“They’re in another room, I was told they were all busy, but no I couldn’t verify this myself. Why do you want to know?”

“Is this your one question Mr Graham?” She smirked. She was worse than most of the people in here. He couldn’t afford to waste this.

“Fine Miss Lounds, here's my question, how did you get into the Institute?” He asked, biting his tongue as he waited.

“The administration block, I climbed some scaffolding and entered a window.” This wasn’t particularly new information to Will. Every inmate had come through there; it's where they were processed. It was the *after* he was confused about, they tranqualisaised the inmates for the journey to their new home.

“And then, how did you get here? What way did you go?” He asked, cringing at the desperation leaking through these words. She’d sniff this out like a shark, there was nothing Freddie liked more than someone under her foot.

“That was your one question, sorry, Mr Graham.” She repeated, turning on her heel.

Leaving already? He’d thought for sure now that she knew she had something he wanted, he’d be used for some scheme.

He caught her shoulder, spinning her back to face him. Red hair whipped his cheek as a cold pressure beard into his stomach. Looking down, thin light caressed a metallic barrel. He took a second to confirm the shape. Definitely a gun he decided, cheap, but deadly all the same.

“Now, Mr Graham. I was hoping we could leave on good terms.” She said, stepping back.

“Freddie, what sector did you enter from the administration block?” He repeated, inching forward despite the threat

“Oh no, I’ve answered my question,” She scanned him over, seemingly unaware of her hypocriticy “besides In the dark it all looks the same.” observing his growing hostility, she raised the gun, lining up the barrel to his face.

There was no way she’d forgotten. His fate depended on her “It's not smart to piss me off.”

Will knew he could disarm her. His stance told him she’d had basic self defence training, enough to feel confident walking home at night, but she wouldn’t be a match for him. He broadened his stance, he’d risk it. What did he really have to lose? His life? God, what a great life it was, all the people who’d miss him, all the good memories to look forward to. He’d killed the only thing to make him happy.

In a quick motion he knocked the gun upwards, taking a tight grip on her wrist. She didn’t make a move to resist, her body resigned.

“It was the women's dormitories,” She answered, sighing, “You ruin all my fun. You think the world needs psychopaths like you reentering it.”

Well that opinion wasn’t unpopular, society certainly thought so. So unwanted, they were used like lab rats, injected and tortured. Noone had noticed their personality literally melting from their head. All so preventable.

There was a rare opportunity presented here, to feel for once an ounce of self righteousness over someone, only slightly dimmed by the nefarious qualities of Freddie's character, but Will bit it back, hesitating. Every Inmate was a victim of the Asylum, but they had all caused victims to be here.

It was a lesson long learnt, that others didn't think the same, or rather couldn't think the same. He'd always been scared he'd end up killing someone, and he had.

It was distinct in his mind, that sickly yellow lighting, the judge blurred threw smeared bulletproof glass reading aloud to the near barren court that William Graham was to be found guilty. His body had dropped, experiencing a tidal wave of relief. The euphoria, that the world was now safe, it was someone else's court ordered responsibility.

But his barrier was only temporary. what has shielded him now enforced a kill or be killed maxim. Thus, he'd done what he had to.

He'd resisted planning his next move if he discovered the exit out, but deep down he knew he wouldn't try for a safe house in columbia, there would be no boat to hide out in in the atlantic. The world couldn't afford his freedom. He'd allow himself to be readmitted. He'd long made peace that the safest thing for the world was him not in it.

He tried to concentrate on Lounds as she began to pull away, but was stuck in his train of thoughts. Hannibal had known his nihilism, possessing a similar gift in observation. Had he suspected Will would take him back into custody with him?

Trying to concentrate he mumbled "Thanks anyway." to Freddie's back. As his words reached her she stopped, turning back around to face him.

His body stiffened, eyes kept on the gun she still held.

"I asked because it appears that families weren't allowed any contact last week. They were turned away at the door, visiting suspended, phones disbanded." Her voice just reached him barely above the volume of the wind.

He squinted, unable to see her expression "That was before the riots." She was pushing him towards the conclusion that the staff knew the riots were going to happen or even that they'd started them themselves, surely not.

"You're a smart boy, think about it." She said, before fully disappearing back into the dark fog.

As the last shape of her evaporated his loneliness burned. His feet stumbled forwards. With a sudden crystal certainty, he realised that he didn't want to be alone again. His body was wracked with shakes as her form dematerialised.

"Freddie lounds, really Will?"

He forced himself still, whispering under his breath in an attempt to calm himself.

A depressing slideshow of his last attempt at a travel companion presented behind his eyes. He could only rely on himself here. He'd made his lonely bed, he'd lie in it. Thinking this didn't melt

the glacier in his chest, but he had to continue. So on he went.

He'd turned right another three times before his path began to rematerialise, there was a light source somewhere close although the fog bared his view. All he could judge was that it was up high. Trebedition ruled over excitement, he was painfully aware the moth-like lure of light. it was likely to be buzzing with inmates.

Walking down an almost completely visibleble pathway, he came to a gap in the fence leading into a grassy courtyard.

A tall cylinder rose high into the air circled by an outside staircase. His neck arched to a glass room at the top blaring light. He squinted through the fog unable to see anyone.

It looked like a control tower. Aware of his growing need for food, with a willful hope of finding some miracle item he talked himself into exploring. He couldn't advance if he stopped looking.

He crossed the courtyard keeping alert, with the wind battering his ears he was already at a disadvantage. He pushed longer strands of hair out from his eyes, quickly checking behind him.

The tower was ensnared by a scaffolding-like staircase. Placing a foot on the first stair it took his weight, so Will began to climb.

It didn't take long. Rounding the top he came to a flat brown door, tall plant pots either side, imprisoning pansies. Trapping the petals between two fingers he felt the satin-like quality, before they ripped, tearing apart.

He looked out at the view. Threw the fog he could see he was surrounded by buildings, many reaching over his head. Two had electricity, bleeding lights into the dark sky, but the rest were dead pillars. There was no way to work out an exit.

Turning back to the door, he reached, twisting the handle. Uncharacteristically helpful the wind pushed, smashing open the door into the wall behind.

"Shit."

The room was glaringly silver. Blinking away the sudden influx of light he made out looming metal cupboards awkwardly hugging the right curvature of the room. Adjacent was outdated machinery, above long white desks, they were in bad shape, littered with food wrappers, in the centre sat a collection of white coffee mugs, green mold connecting them like a watercolour painting. Drawn by the indication of food, he had a quick hunt through the rubbish, but discovered only crumbs.

Pressing a keyboard button at random a light flashed. He'd thought the electrics were limited to the lights but clearly not. He eyed the technology with new enthusiasm.

He hoped this was a computer; it had a screen and keyboard. He wasn't quite sure how and who he could contact on one though. His first thought oddly was facebook, imagine that, his life resting on his social life. He'd should've been sociable with his old colleagues at the FBI, he distinctly remembered pressing ignore on Jack Crawford's friend request and blocking old colleagues when they'd decided to poke him.

Green digits began running across the monitor. Not recognising the software Will concluded this wasn't what he was after.

Eyes following a wire, they met black casing. He'd seen the same model on his old man's boat. Frozen thoughts informed him that this was a radio!

"Yes," He hissed aloud, bubbling energy bursting up through him "oh my god." He whispered, clutching his face. It was happening. It had happened, what he'd dreamt about, he'd found a radio!

He flipped the switch elated to watch blue lights flash along the front. His hands crept cradling the box. The rigid casing kept its shape, as his fingers squeezed. It was real.

He jerked his head to find a sticker on the side with a list of radios connected to this one. There were only two numbers. Security or tech support.

"You would bring them down on us all."

His hand flinched back. Hannibal's breath swept past his ears. Even dead he was present, living within him.

He took a deep breath feeling motivated with spite. He forced his hand around the microphone, triggering the button.

Agonising seconds dragged as a slow green flash began, indicating it was transmitting.

"Arlam securities, name and registration please." The voice crackled.

He scattered paper, rapidly looking for anything that could be the registration number. He remembered now, his dad forcing him to learn the one for the boat regardless of being twenty numbers long. It was the law with these radios. Fuck. It wasn't here.

"Hi-" He took a deep breath, overwhelmed at the concept of explaining this entire terrible situation. Where to start? His tongue darted wetting his lips "T-"

"Name and registration sir" barked the same voice. Will felt their boredom. Night office worker. He could hear the squeak of a chair in the background, feet placed on their desk.

"The inmates have escaped, you need to send someone" Will ordered, deciding to be blunt "There are multiple deaths on the premises"

"Who is this? Without the number I can't process this request, you n-"

"I don't have the number, I am a doctor, we aren't given the numbers, I am scared for my life." Only part of this was faux fear, his own was creeping out.

"We still need- Look, we have to block this number, till we receive confirmation-" the countdown till his lifeline hung up plunged downwards.

"I'm an inmate out of my cell-" the radio light flashed red, followed by the ceiling lights bursting, fireworks erupted in his vision as the room faded to black. The electricity had fused.

His fist crashed onto the desk hitting the keyboard. Gritting his teeth, he breathed deeply.

They'll investigate, he decided, trying to console the frustration poisoning him. They had to. Someone would realise it had all gone wrong. It was unbelievable that they hadn't already. Food

suppliers, cleaners, the family members of staff, hundreds of people all linked to this place, they only needed one to notice.

The casualties brang to mind the dead stacked inside that prison cell, staff uniforms ironed by loving hands, wedding rings clutched between fingers stiff with rigor mortis. Surely there were husbands, wifes, friends looking out their windows for their loved ones to pull up on the drive. Something wasn't adding up here.

With reluctance he acknowledged that Freddys theories were gaining uncomfortable ground. Although if this was all a conspiracy to take out the inmates why hadn't they just switched the Engine with cyanide or something equally fatal, or burn them all in their cells. This slow game wasn't efficient, most of the inmates were still alive and the property was wrecked.

The chair was easy to collapse into. Its last occupant was tall, his trainers barely skidding against the floor as it spun.

This read like torture. If this was the intended outcome, someone wanted them to suffer, die in fear and confusion. Fingers twitching, he ached for a cigarette although he rarely smoked, something to just keep his mind busy.

Catching movement outside, he twisted to watch trees smash against the windows. Branches scratching hello as they shook from side to side. The wind was picking up, floor starting to vibrate.

Following the curvature of the room, an open cupboard stood out. Had that cupboard always stood open?

Odd. He walked over, reaching in to meet warm fabric. Pulling it out revealed course blankets. Staring without seeing, he processed the evidence. Someone had been sleeping here, and they'd only just woken up.

The floor creaked.

There, implanted in front of the exit was a human silhouette.

Trapped in darkness. He tried to interpret the bare minimum he could see; average build, medium height and bald or closely cropped hair.

"Hello" Will chanced, praying for docility.

Triggered by his voice they sprinted, legs eating the space between them.

Ring finger hooking scissors, Will ripped them out, bearing blunt blades towards the man. He rose to full height using the upwards momentum to swing, aiming for deep within his ribs.

As the tip just grazed a frayed jacket, wiry fingers enclosed the scissors, overlapping his fingers.

He shoved forwards, feet slipping on the polished floor, the scissors barely moved. He couldn't use strength here, he was outplayed.

Switching to another strategy he released the scissors, trying to use surprise to rip his fingers out from the man's. But as the scissors clattered to the ground. The man's grip tightened, yanking Will forward.

Off balance, he was easily manipulated, forced over the man's foot. His left arm was twisted, pushed across his back. His elbow saved his face as the floor reared up, body sprawled out.

Fear flooded him as weight landed all up his left side.

"No." He croaked out, thrashing, but failing to twist over. His left arm was completely imobile.

All hope rested with his right. Spider-like, he swept the floor around him mentally replaying the fall of the scissors, searching for a life line, but his hand met nothing but dust.

"You killed my little girl." A cold voice burst out, breath hitting his neck where his fleece pulled down. He'd heard that voice before.

Garret Jacob Hobbs.

He sounded close to tears, Will's heart sunk. His foe was someone who believed he'd killed their child. He was in real danger.

"You will pay now." Blinding pain ranked up his arm, his mouth opened, eyesight going white, as confusion blurred his thoughts. What was happening?

He threw himself back, Hobbs' grip released. His left arm snapped back to his body.

Dream like he listened to the rain, until slowly his eyes informed him that it was his blood showering down to bounce against the flat floor, not the weather outside.

He drew his hand up, squinting through the night at the empty space between his middle and pinky finger.

"Nobody touches my little girl." Echoed from far away. Numb, with a third person awareness he recognised a fist had come down, rocking his head against the floor.

Fight! He screamed internally. Fight, fight for your useless life. He blinked, cringing as what was left of his finger scratched his thumb as his fingers curled to make a fist. He threw his weight forward, knuckles catching Hobbs in the jaw. Shrimping, he got a knee free, shoving it into Hobbs ribs, using momentum he rolled, landing on top.

Beady iced eyes barely changed as Will's fist crashed into his cheekbone again. Will decided he'd never hated anything in his life as much as he hated Hobb's face. He wanted to rip it off. This man didn't deserve life.

Hobbs was shifting, pushing weight on his side with his leg upturned. Will was losing his advantage. His knees tightened around Hobb's thighs, whining as his centre of gravity shifted again. He felt his leg lift, he'd be on his back if he couldn't stop this.

Twisted noises escaped him as his arm came down for balance. His side hitting the floor.

Run

Before he'd made the decision, he was violently pushing Hobbs, feet moving, rabbit instincts taking over.

The door came closer in slow motion, His hand quickly closing around the handle and throwing it open.

Down the stairs he flew. Gasping deep breaths as he hit the bottom, He sprinted despising the open courtyard. Ice pelted his already numb skin, as snow erupted from the sky. It was dark, but with no cover he was an obvious moving target.

"COME BACK!"

That shout had come from right behind, he didn't have a head start.

He entered the gates, barely taking a stride before his face smashed into wire. Warm weight crashed into him as a hand fisting his jacket, throwing him backwards. His world tilted, back hitting the ground.

His body calmly informed him that he was being punched over and over.

He couldn't decipher if it was rain or blood that ran down his cheeks? A droplet ran down the pivot of his nose reaching his lips, he tasted iron. Oh.

His head felt permanently upward. Face numb. His neck wouldn't obey to look around. Unfortunately he was stuck seeing Hobbs, he glared up. If this was it, his last stand, he'd maintain eye contact, Hobbs wouldn't forget this.

Behind Hobb's figure ghosts lined up, his daughter and her dopplegangers. Abigail's feet walked, aparating threw her father before reaching his side, she knelt, taking his hand. Concentrating he tried to hold hers, managing to curl his fingers, soft warmth squeezed his in return.

Finally sensing Will wouldn't be fighting back, Hobbs pulled himself up to full height, feet either side of his thighs.

"Couldn't do it, could you? you killed daddys little girl, but no guts to take on her father!" This was his opportunity, Hobbs had let his guard down. Will fought with himself, arm barely lifting.

Clanking, Hobb's reached into his belt, Pulling out a heavy wrench meant for machinery.

With no foreshadowing, Hobbs flew backwards screaming.

It was his flailing foot kicking Will that jolted him back into consciousness. For a second in the dimness where nothing made sense, Will thought he may have gained telekinesis, until two men strode into his blurred vision, he squinted, they were wearing top hats.

"A pigs got out, lets get the fella back in." Threw the billowing snow he saw it then, a rope tied around Hobb's throat, his choking the only thing audible over the wind.

He flinched as snow pooled into his eyes. The man furthest aways shadowed eyes met his. Shit.

Ignoring the burning cold now billowing down from above he played dead. Eyes narrowly open to remain seeing. The darkness should disguise the small flickers of him blinking.

A face peered down. The older man looked distorted from this angle, nose comically appearing much larger. He didn't look like an inmate, too immaculate.

"This piggys dead. I hate it when they hurt each other. We'll have a ceremony for the young stud" The man spoke inches away, breath clouding the air over Will.

Stud? His thoughts came slow, was it his concussion making none of this make sense?

Despite the confusion he pat himself on the back, he was brilliant at this playing dead act, his body remained still and he barely felt the urge to blink anymore. Ignoring the worrying urge his acting was coming to fruition he drifted, head rocking down, his thoughts toned white, just conscious enough to feel a warm hand clutching his.

Chapter End Notes

This took me three months to write, that may sound ridiculous but I wrote it and hated it soo much, i spent years editing it, and now its probably one of my favourate chapters behind the previous, how many hours I've spent on this.... Thank you so much for reading!!

Please leave a comment :D

I love knowing your impressions whatever they were.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!